The MAHATMA and the NETAJI

Two Men of Destiny of India

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SAMAR GUHA

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Preface

The present book is the outcome of an earnest endeavour to rediscover the basic nature of the political and ideological relations between Mahatma Gandhi and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. It is an attempt, as well, to re-evaluate the characteristics of their contributions towards the attainment of India's independence. Further, it has tried to make an objective effort to understand afresh if these two men of destiny of modern India had any common ground of identity in regard to the concepts of their ideological missions.

The task undertaken by the author may appear rather amazing to many as a common belief persists in India and in the world outside that Subhas Bose was in every sense of the term a complete antithesis of Mahatma Gandhi. It is generally said that Gandhi was a believer in non-violence and Subhas in violence: Gandhi was a pacifist and a moderate and Subhas a radical and a fiery leftist. It is commonly believed that while Gandhi followed the peaceful means of non-cooperation and civil disobedience, Subhas adopted the methods of an uncompromising struggle and revolution. It was because of their characteristically diverse images and for the magnificent roles they played in the freedom struggle, the people of India acclaimed Gandhi as the Mahatma, a great saintly satyagrahi of the non-violent mass movement, and contradistinctively, hailed Subhas, as the Netaji—a Kshatriya hero of the Indian revolutionary struggle. It is, thus, popularly viewed that the Mahatma and the Netaji were two wholly opposite phenomena in the history of the Indian freedom struggle.

About their ideological views also, it is commonly believed that Gandhi was an idealist reformer who opposed modernism and industrialization and stood for khadi and village industry, whereas Subhas was a radicalist who believed in modernism and asked for large-scale industrialization and planned economy for radical socio-economic reconstruction of free India.

The author too shared such popular estimation about the personalities of Gandhi and Subhas for long. As one who followed Subhas during the days of the freedom struggle, the author had been a sharp critic of the Gandhian way, particularly during the days of Gandhi-Subhas conflicts before and after the Tripuri session of the Indian National Congress.

The views of the author about the political and ideological equation between Gandhi and Subhas began to change while he was put to prison by the British during the days of World War II and especially after Gandhi's unprecedented call for 'open rebellion' in August 1942. The historic event of the 'August uprising' of the Indian people impelled the author to rethink about the role of Gandhi vis-a-vis Subhas. In his search for finding afresh the fundamentals underlying the ways and the ideas of the two leaders, the author received a new impetus after he came in close contact with Jayaprakash Narayan in the Praja Socialist Party and, thereafter, while working with him in the Sarvodaya Movement.

The author's quest for re-evaluation of the political and ideological nexus between Gandhi and Subhas found its final answer while he had an opportunity to ponder over the matter in Rohtak Jail (Haryana) during the Emergency of 1975-76. Brooding quietly in the solitary cell, he came to be convinced that, behind the facades of their apparent contradictions, Gandhi and Subhas were two inseparably inter-related components of the history which determined the destiny of the struggle for India's freedom. Without understanding their roles together, the character of India's freedom struggle can hardly be understood. In their ideological thinking also they had a common base of fundamental identity. The author began to believe that for a truthful appreciation of the nature and history of the Indian independence movement, Gandhi and Subhas should be recognized as the two supreme co-architects, who complementarily led to create the final compulsion for the withdrawal of the British imperialism from India. He also came to believe that once the continuing cloud of political prejudices of the past is cleared, it will be found that Gandhi and Subhas were much nearer to one another than considered otherwise earlier.

Strangely, it has missed the attention of most of the biographers of Gandhi that, after the historic escape of Subhas from India in January 1941, the attitude of the Mahatma towards the 'rebel president of the Congress' changed very mystically. No biographer noted the most vital fact of the history of Indian freedom that after Subhas plunged into his revolutionary mission for availing the war opportunity for securing the liberation of India from outside the country, Gandhi said not a word to denounce him nor did he do anything to oppose him for joining hands with the Axis Powers. Only once in July 1942, Louis Fischer succeeded in extracting an oblique remark from Gandhi about his differences with the revolutionary strategy of Subhas. On no other occasion, since January 1941, Gandhi was known to have had any adverse comment about Subhas.

Gandhi was released from detention on April 12, 1944, when the Azad Hind Fauj of Netaji was fighting around Imphal. This easternmost base of the British was kept under siege by the INA for over three months in their move to make a breakthrough into the heartland of India. The British made an all-out effort to decry the war around Imphal as nothing but a Japanese invasion of India. They approached Gandhi to denounce Subhas as a quisling. The Indian Communists joined hands with British imperialists to vulgarly slander Subhas as a Japanese puppet and oppose the war of liberation launched by him. But the British Government totally failed to induce Gandhi to utter even a word of condemnation against Subhas or his war of liberation. On the contrary, he made the greatest gift to Subhas – the gift of the 'open rebellion' of August 1942—which immensely strengthened the position of Subhas in the international world and he got the renewed sanction to speak on behalf of the Indian people. Gandhi did neither say anything nor act in any way against the activities of Subhas since January 1941 that could be used by the British against him. Mahatma Gandhi remained silent and his silence was a big contribution to Subhas.

The political attitude of Subhas towards Gandhi also changed remarkably after he escaped from India. Since he revealed his whereabouts in April 1942, Subhas was not found

to criticize Gandhi in any way any more. On the contrary, he was found to offer eloquent tributes to Gandhi in his broadcasts over Berlin or Singapore radios and seek his blessings for the success of the revolutionary war that he waged against British imperialism for the liberation of his motherland. It has also not been highlighted by the Mahatma's biographers that it was the 'rebel' Subhas, who was the first man, as the head of the Azad Hind Government, who paid the highest homage to Gandhi as 'the Father of the Nation'. It is this magnificent tribute of Subhas to Gandhi which has now been acknowledged by all as the highest national homage to Mahatma Gandhi.

None of his biographers tried to appreciate why the Mahatma's saintly emotions were found to profusely pour on Netaji's image since the end of World War II. In many of his writings in the *Harijan* and in his innumerable post-prayer speeches, Gandhi was seen to pay warm and affectionate tributes to Subhas. It appeared in those days as if the Father of the Nation was longing for the return of the prodigal son to his home. He said in December 1945 : "I believe Subhas is alive and hiding somewhere." In his last post-prayer public speech on January 23, 1948, only seven days before his martyrdom, he spoke on Subhas and Subhas alone. Paying his glowing tributes to him, the Mahatma urged the Indian people to "emulate the virtues of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose." It was the last message of the Father of the Nation to the people of India delivered on Subhas' birthday.

Had Netaji been able to return to his motherland after the war, the legendary hero of the national liberation would have stormed Delhi more thunderously than the historic march of Nepoleon from Elbe to Paris. Could it really happen, Gandhi, would have warmly embraced Subhas and changed his 'heir-apparent'. The history of India's independence would have been written differently and the destiny of India would have been different today. Subhas would have plunged himself again into a new mission—a mission of rebuilding a new India with the blessings of the Mahatma assured for him.

In this book, the author has emphasised the roles of

Gandhi and Subhas as two conjoint heroes of the country's freedom and so two men of destiny of India, who had a large measure of identity to a common concept of a mission for building a new India. The author found that as the two true Indians, having their firm faiths in the spiritual and cultural values of India, Gandhi and Subhas aspired to rebuild India in an Indian way under Indian conditions and in accordance with the heritage of her own ancient civilization.

The author has also endeavoured to present the personal faiths, political contributions and ideological missions of Gandhi and Subhas in harmony, without ignoring the shades of differences they had in this regard. Thus the author has dared to conclude that, contrary to the lingering views otherwise, Gandhi and Subhas were much nearer to one another in regard to the basic concepts of their personal philosophies and about the perspectives of their ideological thoughts. The author re-discovered that as the two pilgrims of Indian freedom, Gandhi and Subhas always thought and worked in an Indian way, setting their visions ahead to evolve an Indian outlook of a national ideology for the Indian people to follow.

The image of Mahatma Gandhi has a wider appeal as a Messiah of peace and non-violence. He dreamt to raise the world civilization to a level of higher consciousness about human values and human relations. The book has not dealt with that aspect of the gospel of "truth and non-violence" of the Mahatma. The objective of this book has been kept confined mainly to the rediscovery of the relations of Gandhi and Subhas in regard to their roles in the freedom struggle of India and find out the extent of the common identity about their missions for political and socio-economic reconstruction of post-independent India.

This book is not the result of any academic dissertation on the lives and activities of the two unique political personalities of modern India. It is, indeed, an offering of a deep faith and a sincere hope that the integrated message of the missions of the Mahatma and Netaji is the message for the future of India. The momentum of the heritage of the freedom struggle of India and its cherished values are, now, almost gone. The

country stands today in the midst of doldrums of dangerous ideological vacuum. The country needs today an ideological inspiration for the renewal of her national faith and national elan. The author believes that the captivating images of the Mahatma and the Netaji of the Indian people in synthesis, and their legacies of the unique ideological missions in integration, should be looked upon as the beacon of national inspiration for rebuilding the future of the Indian people.

If the book finds adequate ideological response from the younger generation, its worth and dignified purpose will then be hopefully fulfilled.

The author tried to treat the subject of the book as briefly as possible. However, he has quoted Gandhi and Subhas quite amply and cited a number of historical documents to substantiate his views and conclusions. Only in the last chapter of the book, the author has made somewhat interpretative analysis about the ultimate objective of their common ideological mission, following their views largely quoted in the earlier chapters.

The book is only an introduction to the subject—a fascinating topic to rediscover the golden nexus between Gandhi and Subhas in harmony and synthesis. It is hoped that some scholars will deal with the theme in the future more comprehensively and in a spirit of dissertative quest. The author has tried to follow a simple style, except somewhat differently in the last chapter, for the purpose of making its reading cosy and easily understandable.

The inspiration of writing this book came from a devout associate of Mahatma Gandhi—Dr. Dinsha Mehta, who is now living as a saintly recluse in Delhi and is known to his admirers as 'revered Dadaji'. The author expresses his deep gratitude to Dr. Mehta.

The author is thankful to Shri Monoranjan Basu in the preparation of the book.

SAMAR GUHA

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The Background

THE TWO MEN OF DESTINY

The Indian people warmly acclaimed many outstanding personalities as their great national leaders during the days of the freedom movement. However, they distinguished only two amongst them as the men of destiny of India. These two unique personalities are Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and Subhas Chandra Bose. They were distinctively identified by their countrymen as two supreme makers of the history of their national liberation.

Gandhi and Subhas pursued two characteristically different ways and means for attaining freedom for the country. Nevertheless, what they achieved, in different ways though, ultimately complemented one another's role to create the final compulsion for the withdrawal of the British from India. Thus befittingly, their countrymen, as if instinctively, recognized their phenomenal contributions to India's independence to hail Gandhi as the Mahatma and Subhas as the Netaji of the Indian people. While evaluating the roles of these two unique persons in the freedom struggle of India, Jayaprakash Narayan observed very rightly thus : "In the history of anti-imperialist struggle of the twentieth century, the Indian people will always remember two names. They are the names of Mahatma Gandhi and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose".

THE MAHATMA AND THE NETAJI

Indians are known to have displayed their deep sentiments to glorify their national leaders in terms of exalting attributes. They honoured Bal Gangadhar Tilak as the Lokmanya and Chitta Ranjan Das as the Deshbandhu. They eulogized Vallabhbhai Patel as the Sardar and adorned Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan with the epithet of Badshah Khan. They were also endearingly greeted Jawaharlal Nehru as Panditji and

Abul Kalam Azad as Maulana Saheb. All these manifestations of popular admiration for their national leaders signified great appreciation of the people for the remarkable contributions these leaders made in the struggle for their national freedom. But the two unique expressions of national adoration—'the Mahatma' and 'the Netaji' for Gandhi and Subhas, respectively—characteristically signified two different concepts of national leadership. The two epithets symbolized the novelty as well as the magnificence of their leadership and the distinctiveness of their contributions to the struggle for national emancipation of the Indian people.

Many Indian leaders vitally contributed to the struggle for India's freedom, but only Gandhi and Subhas excelled in it as the two path-finders and as two incomparable architects of the ways and means for achieving national freedom. Though what Gandhi and Subhas achieved were not exclusively independent of each other, yet the ways and the means they adopted were characteristically different both conceptually as well as in action. Gandhi followed the means of non-violence and satyagraha, whereas Subhas pursued the course of leftism and revolution. Their ways diverged but their objective remained common—the attainment of independence. The people meaningfully appreciated the philosophic as well as the historical significance of their ways and means and as such the image of Gandhi appeared to them as that of a saintly Mahatma—an apostle of non-violence and satyagraha—and of Subhas as that of a Kshatriya Netaji—an epic hero of revolutionary struggle.

ROLES OF THE OTHER LEADERS

During the last phase of the struggle for India's independence, Pandit Nehru, Sardar Patel, Maulana Azad, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, C. Rajagopalachari, Badshah Khan and others were always respected as first-rank national leaders who commanded immense popularity among the Indian masses. These leaders had played prominent roles in all the Satyagraha movements but none of them had played an independent role. They essentially followed the Gandhian ways and means for waging the freedom struggle and worked

out the Gandhian programme and policies under the direct leadership of the Mahatma. They wholly adopted the Gandhian technique of non-violent and peaceful mass movement with Gandhi to guide them as the supreme leader. None of these Gandhian leaders had any distinctive political line to pursue, nor had any of them ever confronted Gandhi on matters of any major policy except when they chose to defy him at the time of the partition of India in 1947. In matters of vital decisions in respect to the principles and programmes of the national struggle, none of them ever acted independently. They were, essentially, the followers of Gandhi or the political satellites of the tactical and strategic system of the Gandhian leadership. Gandhi conceptualized the principles of the non-violent mass movement, later called Satyagraha, and these leaders transmuted the message of Gandhi to the masses. Speaking philosophically and historically, these national leaders had no primary but only secondary roles to play. They were, no doubt, great in many ways, but qualitatively none of them could be called as the supreme maker of the history of Indian freedom.

Besides Gandhi, only Subhas had a distinctive role in the history of India's independence. Subhas alone had his own principles and policies as well as tactical and strategic lines to follow to shape the freedom struggle in his own way. He began his political activities acknowledging initially the supremacy of the Gandhian leadership but after his release from Mandalay jail in late 1926, he gradually started differing from the Gandhian programme and policies and finally broke away to pursue his own independent line of politics in 1939.

During most of the years in the thirties, Subhas followed the overall leadership of Gandhi but not as passively as the other national leaders. He chalked out a radical programme of leftist politics and made attempts to mobilise all the radicals inside the Congress in spite of Gandhi's opposition to such a move. By the end of 1939, Subhas frontally challenged the Gandhian politics and emerged before the Indian people as the only national leader having an image of an alternative to Gandhi. Ultimately, Subhas made the final choice in January 1941 to breakaway from the Gandhian way and outlined his

own independent programme of revolutionary seizure of power—a technique of struggle which was wholly irreconcilable with the Gandhian principles of a non-violent mass movement.

Subhas was known in India till his historic escape from the country as an uncompromising leftist leader and as the 'rebel president of the Congress'. But after he waged the Azad Hind war of national liberation against the British rule and what he achieved thereafter his image effulged in the blazing flare of a legendary hero of Indian national revolution—as the Netaji of the Indian people. From the early forties, besides the non-violent image of the Gandhian leadership, another image of a revolutionary leadership of Subhas surged meteorically in India's political firmament. During the last phase of the struggle for independence, the Indian people recognized Gandhi and Subhas as two principal architects and as two supreme leaders of Indian freedom.

ONLY SUCCESSFUL CHALLENGER

After the advent of Gandhi as the supreme leader of the Congress in 1920, no other national personality succeeded in challenging his leadership. The moderate leaders of the party, grudgingly though, broke away from it and even the extremist leaders like Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal could not match the rising tide of the popular support for Gandhi. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, a known front-rank leader of the Congress of those days, clashed with Gandhi in the 1920 Nagpur session of the Congress and had to ultimately stray away from the party and the main current of the national movement of India, and tragically this one-time nationalist leader and a stalwart of the Congress reappeared in Indian politics later as the founder of the Muslim League. Whosoever came to confront Gandhi, in the early twenties or later, were simply found wiped out of the orbit of leadership of the Congress politics, and the Mahatma gradually attained the position of an absolutely unchallengeable leader of the organisation.

After the failure of the Non-cooperation Movement in 1921, C.R. Dass and Motilal Nehru defied Gandhi to form

Swarajya Party and ultimately succeeded in making Gandhi reconcile with their demand for the approval of their programme of 'council entry'. But this revolt by the Swarajists did not mean any basic defiance of the non-violent ways and means of Gandhi. And, as such, Gandhi soon succeeded to win C.R. and Motilal back into the fold of his leadership. Later, only one or two Congress leaders like Srinivas Ayenger and Nariman had taken somewhat different steps to disobey Gandhi but only to be blotted out of the Congress politics within no time. It was seen that the control of the Mahatma over the leadership of the Congress became so paramount that whosoever defied or challenged it had either to surrender to it ultimately or pass into complete oblivion some time later.

In this era of unchallengeable leadership of Gandhi, only one young leader—Subhas Chandra Bose—dared to deviate from the Gandhian ways and means. Subhas often defied his leadership and had to face the combined opposition of the Gandhian leaders but he remained unsubdued and unvanquished. For Gandhi the non-violent way to attain independence for India was an absolutely immutable concept. Regarding his ideological conviction he was so unsparing that he could hardly agree to accommodate any nonconformist in the higher echelons of the party leadership. For his criticism of the Gandhian constructive programme as not wholly adequate to mobilise all sections of the Indian people under the Congress banner, Subhas was dropped out of the Working Committee formed after the Lahore session of the Congress in 1929. For his defiance of the Gandhian advice not to contest for the presidentship of the Tripuri Congress of 1939 and later for his public protest against a resolution of the Congress Working Committee not to criticize Congress ministers of the various provinces, the twice elected president of the Congress was not only compelled to resign but he was later very harshly expelled from the Congress. This resolution to expel Subhas was known to have been drafted by Gandhi himself. For his refusal to submissively obey Gandhi, Subhas had to face all-out opposition from the Mahatma during 1939-40 but the rebel in him, convinced

about the justification of his own politics, stood firm on his own ground. In India, Subhas failed even after launching a vigorous agitation in 1940 for starting an immediate national struggle to shake the foundation of the Gandhian hold over the Congress and the Indian people. But as a born rebel, convinced of a faith that he had 'a mission to fulfil' for the liberation of his motherland, he staked everything to plunge himself into the cauldron of the world war. Ultimately, under the banner of his Azad Hind Revolution, he succeeded in establishing his own independent leadership to create a new history of national emancipation.

After World War II, the image of Subhas emerged in India as another maker of the history of Indian freedom along with Gandhi. The Indian people hailed this rebel as another man of destiny of India, besides Gandhi. The Mahatma was great because his greatness was of a different concept of values, and, as it was so, he did not hesitate to acknowledge the historic role of his challenger and hail him as 'the Netaji' of the Azad Hind Revolution. Gandhi paid highest tributes to the achievements of this rebel and continued to admire Subhas till the last days of his life.

TWO PHENOMENA OF UNPRECEDENTED IDEALISM

Gandhi and Subhas are to be reckoned as the two unique phenomena of unprecedented idealism not only for India but for the whole mankind. Gandhi will be remembered in history as an apostle of peace and non-violence and Subhas as an epic hero of revolutionary struggle.

Non-violence was universally known as an individual virtue but Gandhi introduced it as a moral rectitude for collectively resolving political and socio-economic problems of human society. The Mahatma gave to India and to the world a novel method of agitation to be known as Satyagraha—a non-violent and peaceful technique of mass movement to fight against all kinds of socio-political injustices.

Subhas created a different ideal—an ideal of inconceivable heroism in the fulfilment of a revolutionary mission. In no age of human history and nowhere in the whole world, a

revolutionary achieved what did the Netaji of India. He will be remembered in modern history as the gloriest beacon of heroism in the fulfilment of the daring concept of a revolutionary mission.

Gandhi's greatness has got wide appreciation in India and the world. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan rightly called the Mahatma "as the greatest man of our age" and Albert Einstein was amazed to evaluate the magnificence of Gandhi as that of a man "unique in political history—a beacon to the generations to come." But Netaji still remained a much-maligned personality in many parts of the world, and in his homeland too his image has been kept eclipsed under the prejudices of contemporary politics.

The history of Netaji's tactical association with the Axis Powers during the days of World War II still lingers to inhibit appreciation of the uniqueness of his role as the greatest anti-imperialist fighter and as a mightly revolutionary hero of our age. The name of Subhas is still taboo in many Western countries, but both in the East and South Asia, he was applauded during the days of war as "the greatest revolutionary hero of our age". His Promethean image as a radical hero and as the crusader against imperialism excelled all concepts of revolutionary idealism. In no time of modern history, a revolutionary was known to have staked his life, like the Netaji of India, to break the dragnet of one of the mightiest imperialist powers of the world and throw himself recklessly into the raging fires of the greatest global war alone—and absolutely alone—in pursuit of his revolutionary mission. It is unknown in human history that a person ever traversed thousands and thousands of miles of the continents of the East and the West alone and crossed the vast oceans almost alone in a perilous submarine journey for about four months in defiance of the ever-shadowing fury of death as did the Indian revolutionary. No revolutionary like him ever dared to build up rebellious organisations and two armies of revolution in as many as 20 countries of the world alone and in about only two years almost out of nothing. No other revolutionary is known to have had waged such a mighty anti-imperialist war from outside his own country as did the

Netaji in leading the Azad Hind War of Indian Liberation against the greatest among the imperialist powers of the world of those days. His revolutionary idealism inspired many anti-imperialist struggles in the colonial countries of South-East Asia. Every leader of national liberation in each of the countries of South-East-Asia acclaimed 'Chandra Bose' as the 'greatest leader of Asiatic Resolution.' Though Netaji failed to reach Delhi straightaway, yet, he succeeded in creating conditions for digging the grave of imperialism in India and South-East Asia, which set in consequence the process of liquidation of imperialism from other parts of the world after World War II. After the Azad Hind revolution, the image of Netaji emerged in India in the majesty of an unprecedented revolutionary heroism and as the greatest anti-imperialist crusader of Asia.

If the Mahatma is the gift of the noblest concept of non-violent idealism, Netaji is the gift of the gloriest concept of revolutionary idealism to India and to the mankind of the modern age.

SUBHAS AS NETAJI

Mahatma Gandhi was seen and felt everywhere as glowing like a sun in the national life of India. Gandhi was adored as the Mahatma from the early days of his advent into the Congress politics and his image as the greatest man of India remained undiminished before the vision of the Indian people till the last day of his life. After his martyrdom, he attained the halo of a new messiah of love and peace for the mankind as a whole. Gandhi's greatness has been universally acknowledged. However, the greatness of Subhas remained unrecognized largely due to the contemporary political prejudice against him.

While in India, Subhas was known as a leftist and a 'rebel president' and was often called by the people as '*Desh Gaurav* Subhas Chandra Bose'. But by the end of World War I, his image, as the Netaji, entered into India like a blazing comet dazzling the vision of his countrymen.

While Subhas was fighting a lonely battle in India in 1940 for launching 'an immediate national struggle', and was, in

consequence, persecuted by the Congress, Rabindranath Tagore, the philosopher-poet of India could foresee the image of the Netaji in making in him. He addressed him as early as in 1940 as the 'Desh Nayak'—the leader of the nation. What the great poet had said proved prophetic in 1945. The image of Subhas returned to his motherland as the Netaji of India. In 1940, Subhas was looked upon by the Indian people as the national leader only next to Mahatma Gandhi. But in 1945, they raised him to the same summit of national glory and adoration as that of the Mahatma.

After the legends of the Azad Hind revolution surged into India by the end of 1945 like a tornado, the whole country was swept into an outburst of unprecendented militant nationalism. The political atmosphere of India was found to be suddenly surcharged with a deluging adoration for Netaji and his INA. Such exalting and universal adoration of a leader was never known or seen in India at any time before. It happened on many occasions that the people who assembled to acclaim the Mahatma instead raised slogans to glorify Netaji. The Mahatma had the instinctive sense of understanding the mood of the people and he realized how the heroic image of Netaji captivated the imagination of the Indian masses. Noticing this adorational mood of the people for Subhas, he wrote in the *Harijan* in 1945 : "The hypnotism of INA has cast a spell on us. Netaji's name is one to conjure with. His bravery shines above all. The political meaning of these measured words of the Mahatma in praise of Netaji and the INA was unmistakable. Gandhi was great, and he could, thus, unhesitatingly appreciate the greatness of Subhas and get above all the prejudice of the past.

NO RIVAL OF GANDHI

Subhas never challenged the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi in any sense of personal ambition nor did he ever aspire to ascend to any height of glory as any rival of the Mahatma. Subhas had no personal ambition of his own; he was indeed a saint-patriot, as many of his biographers depicted him. His only ambition was to fulfil his mission—the liberation of his motherland. For months before he left India, he faced

unsavoury behaviours from his Congress colleagues—even the political attitude of Gandhi towards Subhas then was unsparing. Subhas left India as a man battered in his soul, but as soon as the revolutionary pilgrim plunged himself into the activities in fulfilment of his mission of Germany or in South-East Asia, he forgot all about the treatment meted out to him by the party leaders or Gandhi. He did not utter a word against Gandhi or the Congress or any of the Congress leaders in his broadcasts. He raised two INA brigades in the names of his earlier political adversaries—Nehru and Azad. He raised another brigade in the name of Gandhi. He sought Gandhiji's blessings "in the holy war of liberation of India" and hailed him in the highest esteem by calling him 'the Father of the Nation'. It was the noblest national homage that was first paid by a rebel to the Mahatma. Subhas was verily an 'Indian pilgrim' who in his inner being could hardly entertain any rancour or prejudice against any of the Congress leaders and least of all against the Mahatma. Though he confronted Gandhi many times and differed from the Gandhian ways on many occasions, yet his reverence for the Mahatma always remained the highest.

NATIONAL ACCLAMATION

At no time in the modern history of India, national acclamations of such unprecedented profusion were ever showered on any other leader as it happened in the case of Netaji soon after World War II. Pictures of Netaji and his INA men flooded the country all over. Pages of every newspaper were seen overflowing filled with stories of the revolutionary exploits of Netaji and the INA. Every Indian, breaking the barriers of caste, creed, community, region or religion, hailed him and his INA in exalting his passion for national pride. Even the Mahatma never got such universal ovation from all sections of his countrymen. Indian Muslims, till his martyrdom, demonstrated their overt reluctance to acclaim the Mahatma and terms of any universal adoration. But things happened differently in the case of Netaji. Everywhere in India, Muslims joined the surging chorus of adoration of the great hero of the Azad Hind revolution. The image of Netaji

appeared as the glowing symbol of national unity of all communities of India—the Hindus, the Muslims, the Sikhs and the Christians, alike. Jinnah was known to miss no opportunity to hurl invectives upon Gandhi, but he dared not utter a word against Netaji. Despite his dictums to the contrary, the followers of the Muslim League were seen vigorously participating in all the pro-INA agitations along with the Congressmen and other Indians. For the first time, Jinnah felt terrified about the future of his Pakistan politics by the surging nationalism. The legends of the Azad Hind revolution created unprecedented emotion of national unity all over the country and among all the people belonging to all the communities of the Indian people. This was the political scene of India during the conjunctive periods of 1945 and 1946.

Even the Indian Communists were forced to becompletely silenced. During the war days, the Communists adopted every means to slander Netaji and to denigrate him as a 'stooge' and a 'puppet' of the Japanese. Unbelievably vulgar cartoons were published almost in every issue of their party organ, *People's War*—to smear the image of 'Subhas Bose'. But in the face of avalanching national adoration of Netaji, they dared not to utter a word of even slightest indignation against him. To use the word of the Mahatma, the whole of India was magically 'hypnotized' by the sudden resurgence of the image of Subhas as the Netaji of the Azad Hind revolution.

What Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, who was the rival of Subhas in the historic contest for the presidentship of the Tripuri Congress and whose defeat Gandhi owned as his own, wrote about Netaji in early 1946 revealed how and to what extent he was acclaimed by all as another man of destiny of India. Dr. Sitaramayya, the eminent author of the *History of the Indian National Congress*, wrote: "Whosoever thought that this silent sphinx of the Congress . . . would suddenly develop into a strategist, a warrior, a commander of forces, a rebel and revolutionary in other than softer meaning of the term, and at least a mystery man . . ."

"Greatness never advertises itself until it inevitably comes

into limelight of its own luminosity. Reflected light cannot be independent . . . So did Subhas shine from afar like a radiant orb in the blue firmament . . ."

"Subhas was still a phantom and his name was still a sound when the Indian armies under his leadership and command invaded Imphal and the eastern boundary of Manipur. . . But time solved all problems and riddles and resolved all doubts and difficulties. The return of the INA, the sensational trial that it led to, the wide advertisement that followed in their train brought into light the hidden facts of this great adventure in modern history and revealed the real man in the mystic, the brave solider in the civilian, the genuine revolutionary in the administrator.

"That Subhas's colleagues did not share his principles and polices . . . could not detract for the glory of his adventure . . . unprecedented in character, colossal in magnitude and stupendous in achievement must be assured at its innate worth."

Recounting what a sweeping change the exploits of Netaji brought about in the national life of India soon after World War I. Dr. Sitaramayya, wrote further in extraordinary exalting terms : "A new faith and favour, yes, a new philosophy has been generated in millions of dried-up and despairing hearts much as the showers of the monsoon would cover a fallow land with patches of green verdure. Subhas has proved to the world that Hindustan is still a land of valour and prowess, that India has still in him that sense of national honour for the preservation and perpetuation of which his forefathers had shed their red blood. Subhas may be alive or dead in body, but his spirit and his name will endure long, yes, for ever in history, in common with the names of Alexander and Darius, of Caeser and Hannibal, of Czenkhis Khan and Temur Lane, of Harold, the last of the Barons, and William the Conqueror, of Cromwell and Guy Fawkes, of Kaiser and Hitler".

The political profile of Netaji is conceptually different from Hitler or Kaiser, but by placing Netaji in their category Dr. Sitaramayya wanted to emphasise the excellence of the heroism and the revolutionary character of Subhas Bose and assign him a place of abiding glory in the history of mankind.

The same evaluation of the role of Netaji was made almost at the same time by another internationally honoured thinker, Prof. Benoy Sarkar, who wrote : "The greatest Indian world figure today is Netaji Subhas. Every other publicist, statesman, patriot and intellectual of India, howesoever creative or gifted, has dwindled into a pigmy . . . Liberal thinkers among the British and American historians as well as statesmen may be expected to treat Subhas as but another George Washington."

In 1945-46, all Indian leaders, particularly of the Congress, were seen vying with one another in showering exuberant praises on Netaji. Dr. Radhakrishnan, in paying a tribute to him said : "Future generations will read the amazing story of his life—his fearless courage, his reckless abandon, his suffering and sacrifice—with pride and reverence." Even such a Gandhian leader, Govind Vallabh Pant, who moved the most intriguing resolution in the Tripuri assign of the Congress against Subhas to make him either surrender to Gandhi or resign from the party presidentship, acclaimed Netaji as "one of the greatest patriots and revolutionary leaders ever born" whose "name will remain enshrined in letters of gold in the history of Indian freedom." Sarojini Naidu, who presided over the AICC session in 1939 to accept the resignation of Subhas Bose from the presidentship of the Congress, hailed Netaji as "the flaming sword of Indian patriotism". Sardar Patel, who was never known to be favourably disposed towards Subhas at any time before, very feelingly exclaimed at a meeting in Calcutta in early 1946 : "Oh God ! Give back our Netaji to us !" Rafi Ahmed Kidwai said about Netaji : "Today, he is a national hero, . . . If he is alive and ever returns to this country, he will receive a welcome no one in the country has received so far." Indeed, after the saga of the Azad Hind revolution came to be known to India, every Indian leader, except Nehru and Jinnah, was found to be full-throated in his praise for Netaji.

Many saints and savants of India hailed Netaji as the deliverer of India from the imperialist bondage. One of them, the great saint-philosopher of Sindh, T.L. Vaswani, wrote in 1946 : "Subhas was against all imperialism ; he was a fearless

champion of India's freedom. And he wanted, as Lenin wanted, not a bourgeois revolution but a people's revolution. Like Lenin, too, he came to believe that freedom could not come through a 'constituent assembly' ; (when) he visited Karachi years ago I greeted him as, in mental and spiritual stature, superior to many of his political contemporaries in the East or the West . . . Subhas's militant nationalism was inspired by an idealism which was filled with the love of India's Rishis and Indian ideals . . . Hark! ye, children of the sages of the East ! India is re-rising, radiant with light and aflame with freedom, to give her great message to the nations ! And in the new day that is dawning, Subhas will, I believe, be greeted by millions of men and women as, indeed, as a patriot and a prophet of resistance and revolution !"

These are only a few excerpts from the profusion of national tribute paid to Netaji in 1945 and 1946.

TRIBUTES BY ASIAN LEADERS

During the days of war Gen. Tojo, the Premier of Japan, viewed 'Chandra Bose' as the 'greatest revolutionary of Asia' and his Foreign Minister, Segemetsu, called him "the greatest hero of our age." When Netaji was organising the Azad Hind revolution in South East Asia, the Government of Japan made a secret reporting about the Indian revolutionary. In this report, it was said that "Chandra Bose is not a normal human being ; he is a superman." When the Prime Minister of Thailand, Pibul Songram, was asked in 1944 by journalists at Bangkok to explain his concept of a superman, he said instantly : "Go and see Subhas Chandra Bose !" The President of Nanking (China) called Netaji in 1944 'a saintly revolutionary'.

No attempt was made by the Nehru Government or any other succeeding governments to know how the leaders of national liberation of South and East Asia viewed the role of Subhas. The author had the opportunity to meet many of them in 1959 in the course of the tour of 11 South-East Asian countries as an emissary of Jayaprakash Narayan when each one of them said quite feelingly that they were immensely inspired by Netaji who roused in them a new spirit of "Asiatic

consciousness for Asiatic revolution" to fight against all kinds of imperialism. Dr. Laurel of the Philippines, who was known as an elder statesman during the Geneva days of the League of Nations, told the author when he met him at Manila : "I don't know how far you know your leader. Tell your countrymen when you go back that of all the great men I have ever met, Candra Bose was the greatest." Tunku Abdul Rahman, when he visited India as the first Prime Minister of independent Malaya, told reporters at Calcutta airport : "Netaji raised us from the dust".

Most of the leaders of the national struggle of the countries of South and East Asia are now dead. If the Nehru Government, soon after it came to power, had sent a team of historians to the countries where Netaji worked, more revealing facts could have been known from them about the historic antimperialist role played by Netaji during World War II and what great impression he left on the minds of the leaders of the Asian nations.

MOVE TO BLACK OUT NETAJI'S IMAGE

The greatness of the Mahatma and his supreme position in the national life of India was above question which had been unreservedly acknowledged by all except the Muslim Leaguers. After the attainment of independence, the Government did everything, and, very rightly, to accord national honour to 'the Father of the Nation'. But what about the other co-architect of independence and the other man of destiny of modern India ?

Some Congress leaders were opposed to Netaji's mission of national liberation of India, taking advantage of the international contradictions between the old imperialists and the fascist neo-imperialists. One of them, Pandit Nehru, publicly said that he would 'oppose' Subhas if he tried to enter India at "the head of the Japanese army." In the first AICC meeting held at Bombay in September 1945, after the failure of the August Movement, Nehru, ignoring voluminous protests from the delegates, said that Subhas was a "misguided patriot." Initially, the Congress was reluctant to associate with the spontaneous pro-INA agitation of the people but when the

atmosphere in the country got surcharged with the thundering crises of 'Jai Hind' and 'Netaji Zindabad', Congress leaders jumped into this people's movement for the purpose of reviving the drooping morale of the party. Nehru also rushed to join Bhulabhai Desai in the defence of INA officers in the historic Red Fort trial. From thereon, the Congress turned very vocal in support of the pro-INA agitation, intending particularly to reap political benefits out of it. But, after the partition of India when the Congress came to power, the Governnment of free India almost totally forgot everything about Netaji and his INA.

The National Government adopted an unbelievable attitude of completely ignoring Netaji and the INA. The men and officers of Netaji's 'army of revolution' were thrown to the street. Even the pay, pension and allowances that were due to the INA were not given to them during the days of Pandit Nehru. Only a handful of men and officers of the INA, who were given clearance by the then British Chief of the Indian Army, were taken back into the service of the army of Free India. Before attaining power, every national leader was full-throated in praise of Netaji, but after the transfer of power they were found to have so suddenly kept mum. Nothing was done to collect the historic documents and materials of the Azad Hind revolution from Germany, Italy, Japan or South-East Asia. The Government adopted an attitude as if Subhas Bose was no leader of any consequence to be given national recognition. For over a decade after the transfer of power, the Congress never officially observed Netaji's birthday. Even the British ban against the display of any picture of Netaji in army barracks remained in force for years in free India. It appeared that deliberate attempts were made to black out the revolutionary image of Netaji from the view of the Indian people. All India Radio was directed not be make any special broadcast of the news about Netaji—even on the occasion of his birthday. A committee to write an authentic history of Indian Freedom was formed with Dr. R.C. Majumdar, an eminent historian of those days, as its chairman by the Government but it refused to accept even its preliminary report, as it acknowledged the role of Netaji and the

revolutionaries along with the contributions of the Gandhian movement in the freedom movement of India. Later, the committee was dissolved and some time later a new committee was formed with Dr. Tara Chand as its chairman. Though on many occasions Gandhi said publicly that he did not believe the report of Netaji's death and the Government also received many secret reports from the Wavell Government about the probability of Netaji's presence in Russia, yet for about a decade the Government did nothing to find out what really happened to him. The Government adopted a policy as if to deliberately push the image of Netaji and the glory of the achievements of the INA into oblivion. They adopted the greeting of 'Jai Hind' of Netaji because they could not do without it as the whole nation had already accepted it as the 'national salute'.

Can it be imagined that the Italian Government could ever ignore to recognize the role of Garibaldi after the liberation of Italy ? Can one think that George Washington could be denied the national honour by the United States Government after the emancipation of America from the yoke of the British imperialism ? But it happened in India that the epic hero of the war of Indian liberation—Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose—was totally denied national recognition by the first National Government of free India.

Why did the Government of free India adopt such an overtly unpatriotic attitude towards the greatest revolutionary hero of India's freedom ? Why Nehru and the other Congress leaders so abruptly and so queerly changed their attitude towards Netaji and the INA after they came to power ? Was it because Nehru became afraid about the prospect of the reappearance of Subhas and losing power to him ? Whatever might have been the reasons behind their suddenly articulated policy of total indifference and total negligence towards Netaji and their political move to deny any national recognition to him, one thing about it became unmistakably clear. Nehru and other senior Congress leaders could not attain the height of magnanimity like Gandhi to acknowledge the great historic role Subhas played in the freedom movement. Before 1939, Gandhi was the foremost, Nehru next to him and Subhas third

in the array of the Indian national leadership. Since the beginning of the conflict between Gandhi and Subhas after the episode of the Tripuri Congress, Subhas appeared before the Indian people as the national leader only next to Gandhi. And, finally, after the achievement of the Azad Hind revolution, Subhas, known thereafter as Netaji, came to be recognized as the indisputable fact of history, as the co-architect of Indian freedom along with the Mahatma. Qualitatively, thereafter, all the Congress leaders lost the claim to be placed any more in the same summit of national leadership along with Subhas. Only Gandhi and Subhas were hailed by the people as two supreme leaders of the freedom movement. Subhas himself told Nehru that till the days of the Tripuri Congress he always treated Nehru like his 'elder brother in politics'. Why the 'elder brother' behaved so ignominously to run down Subhas is a matter which will be answered by future historians. However, it cannot be forgotten to our utter shame that the first Government of free India made a deliberate attempt to shut off the image of the greatest revolutionary hero of Indian freedom from the view of the Indian people after attaining independence.

GANDHI-SUBHAS NEXUS

A general belief is lingering in India, as has already been mentioned, that Subhas is a complete antithesis of Gandhi. This is mainly because the popular image of Gandhi still continues to be the image of a *mahatma* of non-violent satyagraha and that of Subhas, on the contrary, of a hero of a violent revolution. It is said that Mahatma Gandhi had always been a religious man whose life style was completely different from the perfectly modern profile of Subhas. Gandhi was commonly known to be a pacifist and a reformist and Subhas a radical and a leftist. Gandhi relied on the conciliatory means of peaceful mass movement and negotiated settlement with the Britishers for the peaceful transfer of power to Indians, while Subhas preferred to pursue the course of uncompromising struggle for the seizure of power from the hands of the alien rulers. Gandhi had the dream of setting up a Ram Rajya or Gram Swaraj in free India, but Subhas hoped to build in it a

modern socialist state. Gandhi was opposed to industrialisation and asked for the revival of village industries, whereas Subhas stood for planned economy and modern industry. It is, therefore, said that the image of Gandhi was wholly irreconciliable with that of Subhas and they symbolized two different types of personalities having no common nexus to relate them together in any concept of harmonious values.

It is a known fact of history that Gandhi and Subhas had many differences, particularly regarding their ways and means of achieving freedom for India. But if a deeper study of the ideological characteristics of these two true Indians and two true nationalists is made, it will be found that, beneath their apparent contradictions, they had essentially a very large measure of identity in regard to their philosophical faiths and socio-political views.

If a dispassionate and objective study of the hopes and dreams the two leaders entertained to rebuild a new India is made, it will be found that Gandhi and Subhas were much closer to one another than many think otherwise. If a re-evaluation of their fundamental thinking is undertaken, it will be seen that belying many common beliefs Subhas was much nearer to Gandhi than Nehru. It missed the attention of many biographers of Gandhi that after the 'great escape' of Subhas, the days of conflict and contradiction between Gandhi and Subhas were over. After he plunged into the fury of World War II, staking everything in quest of the fulfilment of the liberation of his motherland, the attitude of Gandhi towards the rebel changed amazingly and the image of Subhas began to emotionally dominate the vision of the Mahatma. At least, Louis Fischer, a noted American journalist who came in close contact with Gandhi during the days of the war, and Maulana Azad, the Congress president of 1942, unmistakably noted in their books that, after Subhas left India, the attitude of Gandhi about the irrepressible rebel changed and changed very mystically. They were surprised to find, as was also noted by Sir Stafford Cripps in early 1942, that most of Gandhi's political decisions were profoundly 'influenced' by his changed attitude towards Subhas.

It is no rhetoric to say that had Subhas carved his way back into the heartland of India via Imphal, he would have

stormed Delhi more thunderously than Nepoleon's triumphant march into Paris from Elba. And, had such an enventuality really marked the history of Indian freedom, the Mahatma would have embraced Subhas to hail him as his changed heir-apparent.

Most of the biographers of Gandhi overlooked the most significant fact how after 1945 the emotion of Gandhi was found to be swayed by his deep admiration and affection for Subhas and how the Mahatma was longing for the return of the 'rebel'. In many of his post-prayer speeches and writings in the *Harijan*, he focussed his special attention on none else but only on one man and he was Subhas Chandra Bose, whom he on most of the occasions later admiringly mentioned not as 'Subhas' but as 'Netaji'.

In December 1945, Gandhi came to see the senior colleagues and followers of Subhas in the Dum Dum jail of Calcutta. then, all Congressmen had already been released except, mainly By the Subhasists. The Mahatma talked to the detenus for over an hour and mainly on Subhas. The Mahatma was found to become visibly emotional when he talked about Subhas. He touched his head with his forefingers when his eyes were found gleaming as he said very feelingly : "Netaji ! What a *bahadur* he is ! I feel awe-struck, how could he escape from India by throwing dust into the eyes of the Britishers ? He staked everything for the freedom of his country." For a minute, the Mahatma appeared to suddenly lapse into dead silence, and then he startled all the assembled detenus as he said : "I believe Subhas is alive. He is hiding somewhere. Even if somebody shows me the ashes, still I will not believe that Subhas is not alive." The author, who was also then in detention in the same jail, was present in this meeting along with many well-known revolutionary leaders of Bengal, some of whom are still alive. Thereafter, the Mahatma reiterated this faith in a number of public statements. An unforgettable fact which all Indian biographers of Gandhi failed to note, was recorded by only one American biographer in his book. He bafflingly questioned how could it happen that Gandhi, the apostle of non-violence, paid his last tribute in his last public speech to none else but to a votary of violence Subhas Chandra Bose. In his last post-

prayer speech on January 23, 1948, only seven days before his martyrdom, the Mahatma talked only about Subhas and none else. It was the 52nd birthday of Netaji, and the Mahatma said on this day: "I do not remember the birthday of any person, nor do I attach any importance to it ." But the Mahatma could not forget one who abandoned everything for fulfilling the mission of Indian freedom. He continued: "He gambled away his own life for the sake of his country. What a huge army he raised, making no distinction of caste and creed. His army was also free from provincial and colour prejudices. Subhas Chandra Bose was tolerant of all religions and consequently he won the hearts of all men and women of his country. He accomplished what he had set his heart on. We should call to mind his virtues and practise them in our lives." In his last message, the 'Father of the Nation' urged the Indian people to emulate the ideals of Netaji.

After the Tokyo Radio made a unofficial announcement about Netaji's death in an alleged aircrash on August 23 1945, the Mahatma asked the Bose family not to perform any '*Sradh*' ceremony but to 'hold mild prayers'. Gandhi said in a public statement later on January 2, 1946: "I believe Netaji is alive. He is hiding somewhere." He repeated this belief many times publicly in 1946. The Government of India also received many intellegence reports which indicated that Netaji escaped to Russia. But it did nothing to find out what really happened to the greatest hero of Indian freedom. Had the Mahatma remained alive a few years more he would have compelled the Government to make every effort to find out what exactly happened to Subhas. It appeared in late 1945 and early 1946 that the Mahatma was eagerly longing for the reappearance of Subhas.

LOOKING FOR FUTURE

The history of political conflicts and contradictions between the Mahatma and the Netaji has no relevance for the present and also for the future of India. It is now time, in the changed condition of India, to make an earnest effort for the re-evaluation of the relations between these two makers of the history of Indian indepndence. India today needs, and needs

very urgently, a new national ideology for her national renewal. The heritage of patriotism of the Mahatma and of the Netaji and the ideological missions of these two men of destiny of India in synthesis should be viewed as the basis of such a new national ideology.

In the following chapters an objective attempt has been made to corelate the personal and political characteristics of these two men of destiny of India and equate their ideological thinking in the perspective of a patriotic search for a new national ideology for rebuilding the future of the Indian people on the basis of the common missions of the Mahatma and the Netaji.

CHAPTER 1

A Vaishnav and a Kshatriya

MAHATMA GANDHI is known the world over as the pacifist leader of political emancipation of the Indian people and Subhas Chandra Bose as a fiery revolutionary of the Indian national liberation movement. However, the source of inspiration of these two unique political leaders was not political aspiration, as it is understood commonly. Both these two historic personalities were essentially two spiritual men and their inspiration to adopt political wisdom evolved out of their deep spiritual faith. Indeed, they were two human phenomena characteristically Indian in concept. Amidst their stormy political careers, they always lived in an inner repose of their spiritual composure.

Had they followed the traditional ways of religion, Gandhi would have become a Vaishnav Acharya or a Jain Muni and Subhas a saffron-robed Vedantic Sanyasin. Instead, in the eyes of the Indian people, one shined as the political Mahatma and the other effulged as the revolutionary Netaji. It happened so because the image of a Karma yogin, as depicted in *Bhagwad Gita*, attracted them most. They accepted Karma yoga as the way of their spiritual realisation through the service of humanity. This philosophy of Karma yoga, in varying characteristics though, brought them into the whirlpool of the politics of Indian freedom.

It is, therefore, no wonder that Mahatma Gandhi, a great political leader of the Indian people, felt absorbingly inclined to give his autobiography the title of *An Experiment with Truth* and an astounding revolutionary like Subhas preferred to name his self-written life story as *An Autobiography of an Indian Pilgrim.* In no country of the world is any political leader or a statesman of their stature known to have

conceptualized his autobiography in such mystical outlook of spiritual overtone.

The names given to their autobiographies by Gandhi and Subhas significantly revealed the inner nature of their essential beings and the golden nexus they had between them because of their identical spiritual faith. Outwardly, their images were reflected in sharp contrasts but in their inner concept of life they were strikingly close to one another—indeed, much closer to one another, than generally viewed. Both had an identical faith in regard to the manifestation of the concept of spiritual values they entertained. 'Love' was the essence of reality for Gandhi ; so was it with Subhas. Gandhi wrote in his autobiography : 'God is not a person but a force—the undefinable mysterious power that pervades everything ; living power that is Love." This concept of love was the source of inspiration of all of the Gandhian activities. Interestingly, almost in a similar expression, Subhas also wrote in his autobiography : "The essential nature of reality is love. Love is the essence of universe and the principle of human life. I feel . . . I need love as the basic principle on which to reconstruct life."

While both Gandhi and Subhas accepted 'love' as the essence of reality, how was it that this basic concept manifested quite differently in their ways of life and the ways of their activities ? Gandhi considered non-violence as the infallible expression of love but it was not the case with Subhas. Gandhi devoutly observed : Non-violence is the law of human race . . . It does not avail to those who do not possess a living faith in the God of love". Having equal faith in the 'God of love' Subhas wrote, depicting his philosophical faith on the contrary "Reality is the spirit, the essence of which is love, gradually unfolding in an eternal play of conflicting forces and their solutions." And, according to Subhas, this process need not always be non-violent in the literal sense of the term.

According to the known doctrines of Indian philosophies and religious norms and practices that are variously followed, such differentiation in the manifestation of the same concept of 'love' is not surprising. A man deeply merged in the quest of spiritual realisation may adopt two contrary courses either to become a Vaishnav or a Shakta—a votary of the cult of

love or of power. In India among the spiritual aspirants and great spiritual masters, some were found to follow the path of Shanti and Ahimsa (peace and non-violence) while others pursued the course of Shakti and Tantra—strength and power. All such spiritual men believing in different ways of Sadhana i.e. religious consecration, are looked upon as equally venerable in India. Which way a spiritual aspirant would follow in India depends largely on the influences of the family and the caste of his birth, of the social circumstances of his upbringings, his personal aptitudes and the religious belief of his spiritual initiator. Although Gandhi and Subhas had similar spiritual aspiration, yet their ways of its fulfilment diverged and the nature of their activities assumed different forms because they were born of two completely different family traditions and their upbringings were also subjected to contrary influences of different social milieus. Further, they had their initiation to religious faiths by preceptors who were known to follow two different principles of religious beliefs.

IMPACT OF JAINISM

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born of a *modh bania* family of Kathiawad in Gujarat. His father belonged to a Vaishnav sect of the followings of Vallabhacharya and his mother was raised in a *Pranami* society, well known for its liberal attitude towards the Hindu, the Jain and the Muslim faiths. Gandhi's father was an administrator in a feudal state, who exerted little influence over his son, except that Mohandas imbibed certain instinctive *bania* ability and administrative efficiency from his father. In his early youth, Gandhi was a frail, shy and docile boy who showed little promise for the future.

In his boyhood, whatever Gandhi learnt as the virtues to follow in his life later was from his mother. He learnt humility, patience, spirit of self-abnigation and sacrifice, truthfulness, faith in moral principles of social behaviour and, above all, trust in God. In short, all the virtues he cherished and nurtured in future to develop his own personality and his socio-political norms and philosophies were from his mother. The ideal of future greatness of Gandhi as a man of satya

and ahimsa was bequeathed to him by his deeply religious mother. About his mother, Gandhi wrote in deep rapture in his autobiography : "My mother was a devout wife, the memory of which left a deep impression in my mind. She was very religious and never had her food without completing her worship. She used to visit temple every day. I have never seen her breaking the four-monthly vow of a *vrat* (fast). She began to observe rigorous *vrats* and completed them without difficulty. Had she taken a vow of a *vrat*, she never failed that even if she fell ill. During her four-monthly *vrat*, she used to take only one meal a day. Not being satisfied by such practice, she began to take food on alternate days. Observing fast successively for two or three days was nothing hard for her. Once during her four-monthly *vrat*, she took a vow that she would not take food till she saw Surya Narayan (sun). I remember an incident of a day, when I eagerly said : 'Mother, mother, the sun is up.' My mother quickly came out of the room but by then the sun had gone under the cloud. Mother said, 'where is the sun; no, the sun is not there. Fate ordained me to eat nothing for the day'. Saying this she went back to her work".

Next to his mother, Jainism had its profound influence on Gandhi. The people of Gujarat had the mixed impact of Jain and Vaishnav faiths on them, the effect of which inexorably shaped the concept of moral and social values of Gandhi. He himself admitted in his autobiography: "Jainism was strong in Gujarat and its influence was felt everywhere and on all occasions. Jain monks used to pay frequent visits to my father and would even go out of their way to accept food from us—non-Jains. They would talk with my father religions and mundane."

Jainism, as a prevalent social force in Gujarat, in general, greatly influenced Gandhi to develop his religious and moral attitudes. But it was a Jain friend and guide, Raichand Mehta, who profoundly helped him to develop his concepts of religious and moral values and his future philosophy of life. Gandhi used to have frequent discussions and regular correspondence with 'Raichandbhai' whenever he suffered from any spiritual crisis. Expressing his gratitude to 'Raichandbhai', Gandhi

wrote : "I found his talk of absorbing interest. His words went straight into me. His intellect compelled me as great a regard from me as his moral earnestness. .....In moments of spiritual crisis, therefore, he was my refuge".

In later days, Gandhi was moved by the lessons of the life of Christ and the teaching of Christianity. Tolstoy's thoughts and writings also left deep imprints on his mind. In his autobiography, Gandhi wrote again : "Three men of modern world left deep impressions on my life. I was thrilled by Raichandbhai by his personal impact; by Tolstoy by his book *Kingdom of God* and by *On to this Last*—the book of Ruskin." Gandhi wrote further : "I have come in contact, later, with many religious teachers, and tried to mix with preachers of different religions, but none could leave that impression on me that was done by Raichandbhai." He went a step ahead to say, "The more I consider his life and writings, the more I consider him to have been the best Indian of his time. Indeed, I put him much higher than Tolstoy in religious perception".

Gandhi was feeling rather a kind of restlessness about the way of religion he wanted to choose after he came across various religious doctrines and views. At such an uncertain moment, Raichand's crucial letter resolved all confusion in him. Raichand wrote in reply to a series of searching questions of Gandhi.

"Religion is not different sets of opinion. Religion is not just reading or memorizing scriptures or just believing everything said in them. Religion is the quality (*Guna*) of one's soul (*Atma*) and exists among men in a visible or invisible form. Through religion we are able to know our duties as human beings. Through religion we can recognize our true relationship with other living beings. It is obvious that this is not possible at all as long as we do not know our own selves. Therefore, religion is that discipline of spiritual self-perfection (Sadhana) through which we are able to know our own selves. This means that we should take this discipline from wherever it may be found. It may be found in India or Europe or Arabia."

Accepting the views of Raichand, Gandhi observed : "I became convinced that those (religious ideas) we can accept

are found in Hinduism. Raichandbhai was responsible for bringing me to this position. The reader can thus imagine how much my respect for him must have increased."

Thus, it is seen, how his mother, the Jain monks, who frequently visited his house, the books of Tolstoy and Ruskin and, above all, the precepts of Raichand contributed together to develop his future pacifist and non-violent philosophy of life. Gujarat was, in the early days of Gandhi, under the impact of fuedalist outlook of social ethics. The waves of social and religious renaissance from north India and particularly, from Bengal did not yet penetrate into to the social milieu of Gujarat. Therefore, the religious lessons he got from his mother, Jain monks and Raichand remained paramount all along in his quest for philosophical and moral values.

VIVEKANANDA'S INFLUENCE

Subhas had his birth in a renowned Kayasth (Kshatriya) family of South 24-Parganas of Bengal. His forefathers were powerful administrators of Muslim rulers of the earlier days of Bengal. This heritage of his family might have influenced Subhas to make him an able organiser and a capable administrator. The stately demeanour of his father, his reserved nature and compassionate mind greatly inspired young Subhas to build up his character and personality. Subhas was shy and very sensitive in nature and somewhat 'introvert' too as he told about himself. But from his very youth he possessed, according to his personal friends of the younger days, "spotless moral character, indomitable will, dauntless courage and an unbending determination to fight against all odds." In his school days, he often defied his father in answer to his innate urge for serving the poor, particularly the tribals around Cuttack (Orissa) where he was living with his father.

Subhas, even as a young boy, as he wrote in his autobiography, had a "touch of the abnormal in (his) mental make-up". According to his own recollection about the state of mind in his youth, he wrote that he was passing through "an acute mental conflict causing untold suffering and agony" in search of "a central principle" to build up his life around it. In his own words, he had no 'attraction for a worldly life and

was against any thought of 'worldly pursuit.' His "higher self was beginning to revolt" even during his early youth.

How he found the ideal of his life when he was still a school boy, Subhas himself described that in his autobiography. He wrote : "One day by sheer accident.....I came across the works of Swami Vivekananda. I had hardly turned over a few pages when I realised that here was something which I had been longing for. I borrowed the books from him, brought them home and devoured them. I was thrilled to the marrow of my bones...Vivekananda gave me... ideal to which I could give my whole being.

"For days, weeks, months I pored over his works. His letters as well as his speeches from *Colombo to Almora*, replete as they were with practical advice to his countrymen, inspired me most. From this study, I emerged with a vivid idea of the essence of his teachings. *Atmono Mokshartham Jagadhitaya*—for your own salvation and for the service of humanity—that was to be the life's goal. Neither selfish monasticism of the middle ages, nor the modern utilitarianism.....could be a perfect ideal. And the service of humanity included, of course, the service of one's country, for, as his (Vivekananda's) biography and his chief disciple, Sister Nivedita, pointed out : 'The queen of his adoration was his motherland.....There was not a cry within her shores that did not find in him a responsive echo.' The Swami himself, in one of his passionate utterances, has said : 'Say, brothers, at the top of your voice—the naked Indian, the illiterate Indian, the Brahmin Indian, the pariah Indian is my brother.'

"I was barely fifteen when Vivekananda entered my life. Then there followed a revolution within and everything was turned upside down....Both from his portraits as well as from his teachings, Vivekananda appeared to me as a full-blown personality. Many of the questions which vaguely stirred my mind: and of which I was to become conscious later on, found in him a satisfactory solution. Now I thought of the path which Vivekananda had indicated. ...

"No great achievement, whether internal or external, is possible without a revolution in one's life.....The philosophy which I found in Vivekananda and in Ramakrishna came

nearest to meeting my requirements and offered a basis on which to reconstruct my moral and practical life."

In evolving his concept of philosophy of life, according to Subhas's own words, "Aurobindo came as an additional help. He worked out a reconciliation between the Spirit and the Matter, between the God and the Creation on the metaphysical side and supplemented it with a synthesis of the methods of attaining the truth—a synthesis of Yoga, as he called it.....It was so refreshing, so inspiring to read Aurobindo's writings...".

His emotional and spiritual affinity with Vivekananda was so deep and all-pervading that even many years after he was already recognized as the most uncompromising leader of Indian leftism, Subhas recollected ; "I cannot write about Vivekananda without going into raptures.....If Swamiji had been alive today, he would have been my Guru (master) or I would have accepted him as my Guru. It is needless to add, however, that, as long as I live, I shall be loyal and devoted to Ramakrishna-Vivekananda".

Subhas developed the concept of his personality in an age when the highest ideals of Bengali renaissance enriched the life of Bengal by ushering in an era of all-round awakening. According to Subhas, "Modern Bengal is his (Vivekananda's) creation". And, indeed, Subhas was its unique product.

BAPTISM INTO POLITICS

Gandhi and Subhas both were powerfully cast in an ascetic mould. Their first faith was in God and spiritual values of life. Subhas, when he was quite young, made an attempt to renounce the worldy life and retreated to the Himalayas in search of a guru but had to come back as he was told by a *Gurubhai* of Vivekananda that "India expected of him much to serve her in the future".

Gandhi and Subhas entered into politics to serve God through the service of humanity. Politics was not their profession or means to serve any personal ambition. They plunged into politics harking the characteristic urge of the spiritual values of India.

Gandhi wrote about himself in the *Harijan* (1938) : "I cannot be leading a religious life unless I identified myself with

the whole of mankind, and that I could not do unless I took part in politics. The whole gamut of man's activities constitutes an indivisible whole. You cannot divide social, economic, political and purely religious works into watertight compartments." Earlier, he wrote in his autobiography : "A man, who aspires to see the universal and all-pervading spirit of Truth, cannot afford to keep out of any field of life. That is why my devotion to Truth has drawn me into the field of politics."

The motto of Vivekananda—'to serve God through the service of humanity'—and his adoration and love for India and the Indian people brought Subhas also into politics. It was not Subhas alone but most of the patriots and revolutionaries of Bengal were inspired into politics by the ideals and the clarion call of Vivekananda—the Vedantic revolutionary. Subhas defined his concept of politics as 'collective *Sadhana*' and said of himself : "I have not accepted politics or national service as any kind of profession. The way of liberation of my country is the way of my worship, my *sadhana*, my salvation."

There was a time in his early youth when Subhas thought that "moral development was possible while steering clear of politics." "But", he realised later, as he recorded in his autobiography, "now I am convinced that life is one whole. If we accept an idea, we have to give ourselves wholly to it and allow it to transform our entire life".

Indeed, politics was not a profession but a higher mission of life for both Gandhi and Subhas.

SHANTIVAD OR SHAKTIVAD

The paramount impact of Vaishnava and Jain faiths made Gandhi a believer in the precepts of Shantivad, i.e., in the way of peace. Gandhi, accordingly, accepted non-violence as the cardinal principle of all his political and social activities. In fact, his aspiration was higher than achieving independence for India through non-violent means. He dreamt of bringing out a radical transformation in the concept and character of social and political relations of the human race by invoking ethics of collective non-violence.

Regarding the means of achieving freedom for India, Gandhi developed an attitude of absolute faith in non-violence. The lessons of patience, humility, austerity, fasting, aself-abnegation and truthfulness he had learnt from his mother, all these virtues he integrated into his concept of the technique of satyagraha, which he broadly used as the means of struggle for political and social changes.

Non-violence was considered initially as a 'policy' to work out the technique of 'passive resistance' against the alien authority of the British Government. But increasingly it became an absolute 'creed' with Gandhi, when he decided to elevate the idea of passive resistance into a neo-religious principle of satyagraha. Explaining his faith in non-violence, Gandhi wrote : "Non-violence is the law of human race...It does not avail to those who do not possess a living faith in the God of love." He said further, "When non-violence is accepted as the law of life, it must pervade the whole being and not be applied to isolated acts ...It is a profound error to suppose that while the law is good enough for individuals, it is not for masses of the mankind." Gandhi, thus, became an absolute votary of non-violence which he desired to apply in resolving all social and political conflicts. Or, in other words, non-violence became the essential principle of all his activities.

Subhas could not accept the absolute claim of the Gandhian ethics of non-violence. As a follower of Vivekananda, he believed not in the precepts of *Shantivad* but in the principles of *Shaktivad*—the cult of power and strength. It is difficult to find an exact equivalent to express the philosophical meaning of these two Indian concepts. Recollecting his experience when he was only fifteen, Subhas used a very significant phrase in his autobiography that "Vivekananda entered my life." Thereafter Subhas was verily transformed into a kind of an alterego of Vivekananda. Indeed, one has to understand Vivekananda to understand the philosophy and the life of Subhas. His love and adoration for India, his concept of Indian nationalism, the basic tenets of his socio-political ideas, his outlook of socio-cultural values, his life's mission—everything Subhas imbibed from the fundamentals of the mission of Vivekananda.

How the image of a Kshatriya-Sanyasin of Swami Vivekananda had its spell on the life and philosophy of Subhas is evident from his views about the Swami. To Subhas, "Swamiji was a full-blooded masculine personality—a fighter to the core of his being. He was consequently a worshipper of Shakti and gave a practical interpretation to Vedanta for the uplift of his countrymen. 'Strength, strength is what Upanishads say'—that was a frequent cry of his." (Letter from Seoni Jail, 1932). Bengal revolutionaries and Subhas were baptized to the cult of Shaktivad or revolution by the philosophy Vivekananda. Subhas could not, because of the influence of Vivekananda on him, accept *Ahimsa* or non-violence as the only and absolute manifestation of the spiritual concept of 'love'.

TWO KARMA YOGINS

Mahatma Gandhi and Subhas Bose were more than two politicians of common understanding—They were really two *Karma yogins* of the ideals of the Gita. The Gita was the mother of inspiration to both of them. Gandhi wrote that for him, "The Gita became an infallible guide of my conduct. It became my dictionary of daily reference." It happened similarly in the case of Subhas as well. Subhas memorized Gita from beginning to end and its precepts became the perennial guide to all his actions. A Gita and a Chandi (the scripture of the cult *Shakti*) were found to be constant companions of Subhas.

Again, and very interestingly, Gandhi discarded all the known interpretations of the Gita and explained its technique of Karma in his own way. He believed that the absolute virtues of satya and ahimsa (truth and non-violence) should guide all the concepts of Karma of the Gita. He, thus, became a non-violent Karma Yogin.

On the other hand, Subhas adopted the well-known interpretations of the Karma concepts of the Gita as made by ancient sages and seers. What Vivekananda, Tilak and Aurobindo accepted as the interpretation of the ethics of Karma was also accepted by Subhas as valid. According to this view, if the performer of Karma remains non-attached to the

outcome of his Karma and this objective of Karma remains pure and impersonal, the means of Karma need not be hide-bound by particular ethics of violence or non-violence. He could not accordingly accept non-violence as the only and absolute means to attain freedom for India.

Thus, different interpretations of the same concept of Karma bifurcated the concept of the means of the freedom struggle of Gandhi and Subhas and, in consequence, Gandhi was known to become a Vaishnava Karma yogin and Subhas a Kshatriya Karma yogin. Or, in other words, Gandhi turned to be a non-violent Satyagrahi and Subhas a revolutionary warrior.

ABIDING INSPIRATION

Gandhi and Subhas always lived with their faith in God. Their political activities were essentially guided by this faith, though their life-style and the style of their politics were ostensibly different.

Gandhi lived like a religious man, even in the course of his political and social activities. He offered morning and evening prayers daily,—not alone but with his associates and with common people as well. His writings and utterances had always the mystic resonance of religious vibrations. He wanted to permeate political and social consciousness with the consciousness of religious values. This was the fundamental characteristic of the Gandhian politics. But his religious ways were generally non-formal and he desired to synthesize the essential values of all religions into an integral harmony of universal value. God was, thus, his perennial friend and guide. When the assassin's bullets pierced his heart, the last words that waved out of the trembling lips of the collapsing Mahatma were '*Hai Ram.*'

Subhas was also a deeply religious man. He went through the rigorous practice of meditations in his younger days. Even in the course of his stormy political life, he never gave up this practice. Like Gandhi, Subhas also believed in the perception of synthesis of the essential values of all religions. This outlook he imbibed from the teachings of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda.

Subhas was, however, disinclined to mix up religion with politics. Religious faith was his personal source of inspiration. On many critical moments of his political life, he was known to take decisions after performing Puja or having deep meditation. He undertook a fast in Mandalay jail in 1926 to assert the rights of the political prisoners to perform Durga Puja inside the jail. After the shock of the Tripuri Congress, he was feeling tempted again to go back to the Himalayas and he remained aloof from the world for quite a few days. He took the greatest decision of his life in 1941 to undertake a fast unto death in his bid first to go out of jail and then escape from India after performing Kali Puja inside the jail. After his release, he used to perform puja daily and sit in meditation.

Dr. N.B. Khare, who met Subhas in January 1941 in his Elgin Road house, noted in his *Memoirs* that when he entered into the room of Subhas Bose, he found that "there were articles of prayer and worship near his bedstead. Nearby was lying a copy of the Gita or some other scriptures and on his bed was a rosary. Life-size portraits of Ramakrishna, Vivekananda and other saints adorned the walls. I thought I had missed my way and entered the ashram of a Sadhu, instead of the room of a politician".

During the hectic days of the Azad Hind revolution when he had plunged himself into the adventure of most daring revolutionary activities, he maintained his unshakable faith in God. The spectre of death shadowed him almost constantly but he always remained unconcerned and self-composed because he believed that he was ordained by God to complete his mission. In those war days, he was often known to slip out of his house at the dead of night, enter a Buddhist pagoda or a Ramakrishna Mission temple and sit in silent meditation for hours. It happened on many occasions at Rangoon, Singapore or Bangkok.

Like Gandhi, Subhas had nothing of his own. He had also no claim over any personal property as his own. But he was known to never part with a bag—a small leather bag—containing a set of amazing personal treasures. This bag contained a tiny edition of the Gita, a small image of Chandi

and a *Tulsi Mala.* Netaji left much evidence—many burnt out jewels, gold ornaments and ear-rings, gold bars and costly coins of the Azad Hind Government as proofs of his 'death' in an alleged air-crash. But even for the sake of leaving some kind of positive proof of his 'death' for convincing the Anglo-Americans, he could not leave his leather bag behind, containing the Gita, the Chandi and the Mala—the last resort of the 'pilgrim' ever living in him in quest of the fulfilment of his spiritual mission as a Karma yogin. This last treasure—the Gita, the Chandi and the Mala, together the most invaluable treasure of his life—he carried with him in his plunge again into a destiny unknown and unperceived !

Gandhi and Subhas are the two unique phenomena of political leadership in the modern world of our mankind. Both of them were deeply imbued with spiritual faith in all their socio-political activities. Gandhi was perceptibly religious while Subhas was innately spiritual. They worked, in whatever sphere of their activities, as two spiritual pilgrims. Such examples of spiritualised concept of sociopolitical leadership are rare, perhaps unknown, in the modern world. Gandhi and Subhas—the Mahatma and the Netaji of the Indian people a Vaishnav karma yogin and a Kahatriya karma yogin—are the two beacons of the Indian concept of political leadership for the Indians themselves and for the larger mankind as well. Gandhi and Subhas blossomed from the same source of spiritual faith but they branched out differently into two different sects of karma yogins of the Indian heritage. They are, indeed, two unique products of the essential concepts of Indian values. Indian culture and Indian outlook of life.

CHAPTER 2

Two Ways to Freedom

A COMMON belief persists both in India and abroad that Mahatma Gandhi believed in non-violence and Subhas Bose in violence in respect to the ways of their struggle for India's independence. And, this was thought to be the vital reason for their political differences. This is rather an over-simplified characterization of the ethics of this means to attain independence.

Non-violence was the principal axis of all political, social and personal faith of Gandhi. It was indeed the basis of his philosophy of life. This was, however, not the case with Subhas, but still, so long he was in India, he accepted non-violence as the main policy to guide the unarmed struggle of his countrymen. The position of other Congress leaders like Pandit Nehru, Sardar Patel or Maulana Azad was not altogether different from Subhas. Neither these leaders nor the Congress as a whole agreed with the Gandhian view of non-violence as any fundamental 'creed'—they accepted it only as an expedient 'policy'. Even as the president of the Haripura Congress, Subhas re-affirmed his acceptance of 'passive resistance' of satyagraha as the means of national struggle for independence by the Indian people. However, his attitude was different from other Congress leaders, as he kept his option open to change this policy if its efficiency proved inadequate and circumstances appeared more advantageous for the adoption of any other method different from the non-violent one.

Differences between Gandhi and Subhas essentially arose not on the question of the utility of the non-violent method but about the technique and strategy of applying this method for winning independence. Till January 1941, Subhas broadly followed the Gandhian means of the non-violent mass movement.

FIRST MEETING

Subhas developed a sceptic outlook about the claim of absolute efficacy of the strategy of 'passive resistance' for winning independence on the very day of his first meeting with Gandhi. After resigning from the I.C.S., Subhas anxiously rushed to India to join the already announced Non-cooperations Movement. After landing at Bombay on July 16, 1920, the first thing he did was to meet the supreme leader of this national movement—Mahatma Gandhi—the same day.

About this meeting Subhas recorded in his book *The Indian Struggle* : "My object in seeking an interview with Mahatma Gandhi was.....to obtain a clear understanding of the details—the successive stages—of his plan, leading on step to the ultimate seizure of power from foreign bureaucracy.....There were three points which needed elucidation. Firstly, how were the different activities conducted by the Congress going to culminate in the last stage of the campaign, namely, the non-payment of the taxes? Secondly, how could mere non-payment of taxes or civil disobedience force the Government to retire from the field and leave us with our freedom? Thirdly, how could the Mahatma promise Swaraj within one year.....?

"His reply to the first question satisfied me.....The Mahatma's replies to other two questions were not convincing ...His reply to the second was disappointing and his reply to the third was no better...My reason told me clearly...that there was a deplorable lack of clarity in the plan which the Mahatma had formulated and that he himself did not have a clear idea of the successive stages of the campaign which would bring India to her cherished goal of freedom."

Subhas felt disappointed because he had yet to understand the technique and strategy of the Gandhian non-violent passive resistance. According to "his study of the methods and tactics employed by revolutionary leaders in other parts of the world and in the light of that knowledge", he "wanted to understand the Mahatma's mind and the purpose." It was quite natural, therefore, that he failed to understand the Gandhian way in the light of his own preconceived technique of the freedom struggle. Later, it became very evident to Subhas that the

known revolutionary methods and tactics of the seizure of power were totally alien to Gandhi's concept and technique of non-violent passive resistance or satyagraha as it was called a decade after.

PEACEFUL TRANSFER OF POWER

Gandhi adopted the ideas of Swaraj and Swadeshi and the agitational programme of boycott of British goods, political fast, hartal, picketing, non-cooperation, peaceful violation of law—all that developed during or in the wake of 1905 Anti-Partition Movement in Bengal. He gave a philosophical content to all these ideas and programmes and synthesized them into his concept of the programme of passive resistance. He rejected the old Congress line of constitutional reforms and rigorously discarded the extremist programme of the revolutionaries. Gandhi adopted the constructive programme for mobilising the Indian people under the banner of the Congress and formulated the non-violent and peaceful means of mass movement to rouse a spirit of defiance in them against the British rule.

Gandhi believed that the programme of passive resistance—namely, boycott of British goods, non-cooperation with the British administration and civil disobedience, i.e., violation of government laws, including non-payment of taxes, successively or simultaneously—will lead to create compulsion for the British to concede power to Indians. He believed further that the self-imposed suffering of the unarmed people will change the heart of the British rulers, on the one hand, and the pressure of defiance of the administration, on the other, will lead to a situation when the alien government will have to agree to negotiate with the Congress and peacefully transfer power to Indians. Gandhi himself wrote in *Young India* in 1928: "When freedom comes, it will have to come through a gentlemanly understanding with Britain." He repeated it many times and to meet Subhas's criticism, Gandhi again wrote very pointedly: "Indeed, satyagraha demands a compromise with Britain." (1940)

By the end of the decade, after Gandhi introduced his technique of passive resistance, he gave it a more philosophical

connotation by calling it Satyagraha. The virtues of his non-violent 'means' became more important for Gandhi than the 'end', i.e., the independence of India. Accordingly, if any attempt was made to seize power from the hands of the British, Gandhi would call it the "dacoits' swaraj". He categorically wrote in *Young India* : "If India attains freedom by violent means, she will cease to be the country of my pride, that time will be a time for me of civil death." (1929) He further said : "To expect freedom without...non-violence...is to plough the sands." (Preface: *Gandhian Way* : J.B. Kripalani) Gandhi's dream about the values of non-violence attained a plane even higher. He wrote again : "If her (India's) self-consciousness rises to the height necessary to give her a non-violent victory in her fight for freedom, the world values will have changed and most of the paraphernalia of a war would be found useless. Such an India may be a dream—childish folly—but such, in my opinion, is undoubtedly the implication of an India becoming free through non-violence." (*Young India*, 1929)

Gandhi was always very specific about his means, namely the constructive programme and the programme of satyagraha, but how such means could lead to the ultimate success of achieving the 'end', i.e., the independence of India, he never enunciated quite clearly. Instead, he always used mystic expressions like: "For me it is enough to know means; means and ends are controvertible terms in my philosophy of life" or "I have often said that if one take care of the means, the end will take care of itself." (Belgaon Congress, 1920, *Harijan*, 1939)

Gandhi never believed to win independence by a single sweep or one decisive struggle. He contemplated to achieve it step by step, through gradual concessions of powers to Indians through compromises and negotiations with the British Government. He, therefore, kept the idea of Swaraj indefinable for long. In the 1928 Calcutta Congress, it was defined as the 'dominion status' and in the 1929 Lahore Congress 'swaraj' was stated to mean 'complete independence'. But shortly after the adoption of the Lahore resolution of 'complete independence', Gandhi interpreted it as the 'substance of independence' in his letter to the Viceroy, Lord Irwin. In the 1931 Round

Table Conference, he categorically told the British that he wanted India to remain in a "commonwealth...in...an indissoluble partnership" with Britain, which in other words meant that he would be satisfied with a dominion status for India.

It will be wrong to conclude that Gandhi wanted to keep India permanently tugged with the British empire, but what he wanted for India was to attain a completely independent status, stage by stage. He, therefore, never talked of the 'end' but of the 'means' only and was totally opposed to any idea of forcible seizure of power from the British. He thought that if he attempted to achieve complete independence by any single step, such a step was bound to lead to the process of seizure of power in the ultimate stage of the struggle and such struggle was bound to release the forces of violence. Gandhi was, thus, very careful in avoiding the Indian army and the police to ask them to join civil disobedience movements launched by him in 1921, 1930 and 1940.

Gandhi's means of attaining independence was quite consistent with his firm adherence to the ethics of non-violence. He was very clear about the 'end', and about his 'means' he believed that satyagraha will lead to compromise and a negotiated settlement with the British Government for attaining gradual political power by Indians. Thus, the ultimate strategy of the Gandhian means of satyagraha to win freedom was not the seizure of power but the peaceful transfer of power through a 'negotiated settlement' and a 'gentlemanly agreement'—two phrases often used by the Mahatma himself.

SEIZURE OF POWER

Subhas Bose hailed Mahatma Gandhi in the early thirties as 'India's man of destiny.' He observed further in *The Indian Struggle* : "The Indian National Congress of today is largely his creation. The Congress constitution is his handiwork. From a talking body he has converted the Congress into a living and fighting organisation...The success of the Mahatma has been due to the failure of constitutionalism, on the one side, and armed revolution, on the other." Subhas welcomed Gandhian passive resistance as a 'new weapon' 'novel weapon' or 'a new method' to fight for India's freedom. He was not

opposed to Gandhian means of non-violence but was opposed to accept non-violence as an absolute creed. In his address of the Haripura Congress (1938), Subhas said, "I believe the method of national struggle should be satyagraha or non-violent non-cooperation in the widest sense of the term, including civil disobedience. Satyagraha, as I understand it, is not merely passive resistance but active resistance as well." This phrase—'active resistance'—carried in a nutshell the implication of Subhas's political strategy.

The issue of non-violence was not philosophical or an ethical question with Subhas. To him it was essentially a tactical question. For the unarmed people of India, it was considered by him as an appropriate method for mass movements. But he was not inclined to accept it as any new social philosophy as conceived by Gandhi. Subhas was also very critical about the "dual role of Gandhi"—'Gandhi as the leader of India' and 'Gandhi as a world teacher' to preach the new 'gospel of Ahimsa or non-violence.' According to this young leader of the Congress, Gandhi should have concentrated all his attention and energy mainly to fight for India's freedom.

Like Vivekananda, Subhas was also against over-emphasising the virtues of non-violence because, according to him, "inordinate belief in fate and supernatural" of the Indian people and "the peaceful contentment engendered by the later-day philosophy and adherence to ahimsa carried to the most absurd length" was the cause of "India's downfall in the material and political sphere." (*The Indian Struggle*).

Subhas wholly appreciated the importance of the Constructive Programme of Gandhi, which included Charkha and hand-spinning and hand-weaving, removal of untouchability, promotion of Hindu-Muslim unity, propagation of Hindustani, extension of national education, support to prohibition, setting up of voluntary arbitration boards for settling village disputes and other items. However, Subhas thought that, with the growradicalisation of the outlook of Indian politics, youths, students, labour, peasants, backward classes, tribals and women should also be organised by the Congress 'on the basis of their specific grievances' and their class or mass organisations

should be affiliated with the party for the expansion of the mass base of this national organisation. After coming out of Mandalay Jail, in late 1926, Subhas made an all-out effort to organise students and youths and inspire them with the ideal of burning patriotism, bring the labour organisation nearer to the Congress and radicalise the concept of independence by spelling out the socio-economic programme that free India was expected to adopt. Subhas called this programme a 'socialist programme' with an intention to supplement the Gandhian Constructive Programme for mobilising the masses under the banner of the Indian National Congress.

WORLD SYMPATHY

Subhas also very much desired to cultivate international sympathy for the cause of Indian independence and utilise the contradictions among the world powers in India's favour. He wrote : "If we desire to win our freedom through non-violence, diplomacy and international propaganda are essential." (*The Indian Struggle*) In co-operation with and having full support of Vithalbhai Patel, a very respected elder statesman of 1930 and an elder brother of Sardar Patel, Subhas in 1933 set up 'India centres' in most of the European countries and had meticulously drawn up an elaborate programme for the cultivation of world sympathy for the cause of India. But neither the Mahatma nor the Congress, not even Pandit Nehru who always talked of international politics, had lent any support to his international programme. Besides, a large amount of money that was given to Subhas in his will by the late Vithalbhai Patel for the work of international propaganda was also unseemingly snatched away by Sardar Patel on some flimsy legal plea. Till 1942, the Congress, Gandhi or Nehru never made any positive effort to welcome and cultivate international attention for the cause of independence. This task was exclusively undertaken by Subhas.

The most vital differences between Gandhi and Subhas arose over the objective of independence and the strategy to win it—the two aspects of which, according to the outlook of Subhas, were inexorably inter-linked. Subhas was all for achieving complete independence and not to accept it in stages.

Any idea of a dominion status for India within the British Commonwealth was totally repugnant to him. He, therefore, relentlessly fought for propagation of a clearly defined concept of complete independence which he viewed as nothing short of achieving absolute sovereignty of the Indian people, having no connection whatsoever with the British empire. He uncompromisingly stood for a completely independent and self-reliant national personality of the Indian people. Subhas, therefore, sharply differed both with Gandhi and Nehru in his perspective of independence.

As the objective of Subhas was complete independence, he could never believe that the Gandhian way of negotiated settlement with the British for a peaceful transfer of power will ever lead to independence. The strategy of the freedom struggle of Subhas, therefore, radically differed from the Gandhian technique of a peaceful transfer of power. Subhas thus, deliberately used the phrase 'active resistance' in place of 'passive resistance', because his objective of utilising the non-violent means of non-cooperation, civil disobedience and no-tax campaign was to create in the last phase of the movement a total administrative vacuum in the country. This expected vacuum he wanted to fill up by setting up a 'parallel government' of the Indian people. This strategy otherwise meant a non-violent seizure of power. Subhas borrowed the idea of 'parallel government' from Irish revolutionaries and was supported by C.R. Das and Tagore.

Subhas was quite clear in his mind that without the participation of the army and the police in the final phase of the non-cooperation-cum-civil disobedience movement, a situation leading to complete administrative vacuum could never arise. Criticising the shortcomings of the Gandhian technique of the freedom struggle, he raised the basic question in his 1933 London Political Conference speech—why with such immense mass following and having conducted two mass movements of 1921 and 1930, the dimensions of which were never known or seen either in India or any country of the world at any time before, the Mahatma failed to achieve independence for India? It was because, Subhas thought, apart from other drawbacks of the Gandhian technique, the Mahatma never called or

planned for the participation of the army and the police in his non-violent mass struggle and according to him, this was the most vital reason for the failure of Gandhian satyagrahas to achieve independence.

Even in his last bid to achieve independence from within the country through non-violent means, when he made a frantic effort to persuade Gandhi to launch an immediate national struggle to seize the opportunity of the war, Subhas stressed in his 1940 Nagpur Conference speech that, in the course of the final struggle for freedom, the objective should be to form a parallel government in its last stage. For this, Subhas said, "panchayats be formed backed by volunteer organisations in every locality beginning from the village right up to the centre to function as organs of national struggle and later as organs of administration."

The stand of Nehru, so far as the strategy of winning independence was concerned, was not different from Mahatma Gandhi. Although Nehru was often seen to maintain a radical and somewhat leftist posture but he never believed that independence could be achieved straight away by seizing power from the British. He talked of complete independence, no doubt, but his political moves unmistakably showed that he was not averse to the acceptance of a dominion status within the British Commonwealth. Because of this outlook, Nehru raised a misleading issue in 1940 asking the British Government to set up a constituent assembly to draw up the constitution of future India. It evoked a sharp criticism from Subhas, who pointed out that a constitution of free India could never be drawn up under the aegis of the British rule. For this Subhas stated categorically..."...the Congress will have to come out victorious (after a national struggle) and form a provisional government to take over power." He concluded that only such a provisional government could be expected to set up a constituent assembly of the sovereign people of India.

THE REVOLUTIONARIES

As a mission of non-violence, Gandhi adopted a stubborn attitude to root out all thoughts of violent revolution from the concept of the Indian freedom movement. He was not prepared

to entertain even any sentiment for the extreme sacrifice made by any revolutionary. In the 1924 Congress session, when C.R. Das moved a resolution in praise of the martyrdom of Gopinath Saha, who was hanged for attempting to kill the ill-reputed British I.G.P. of Bengal, Gandhi threatened to quit the party if it was passed. The resolution was, thereupon, withdrawn. Innumerable revolutionaries were seen to embrace martyrdom after Gandhi assumed the leadership of the Congress but the Congress and Gandhi always maintained a kind of stoic silence over such patriotic events. Even when the glowing self-immolation of Jatin Das, a colleague of Bhagat Singh, for demanding the recognition of the political status for revolutionary prisoners rocked the patriotic sentiment of the Indian people, Gandhi remained completely silent over such a poignant event. He believed that he had to take such a rigid stand as he was an implacable votary of non-violence and could not, therefore, show any sentiment for any violent activity of the revolutionaries or for any martyrdom of any revolutionary.

Subhas was not a member of any revolutionary group, nor did he believe that revolutionary terrorism could succeed in achieving independence. However, he had the sympathy for the revolutionaries and admiration for their spirit of militant nationalism and their patriotic sacrifices. In the late twenties and early thirties, most of the youth and student conferences were known to be organised by the youth wings of the revolutionaries. And Subhas, with his captivating image of the aspiration of the Indian youth, was found to be invariably invited to preside over most of these conferences. He utilised these platforms for propagating his ideas of allround freedom and left-nationalism and all about his thoughts of Indian socialism. He wanted to keep the spirit of revolution burning as a beacon of any eventual prospect of an armed revolution if the situation changed for such an option.

Gandhi had to yield, however, to the emotional surge of revolutionary martyrdom when Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev were hanged a few days before the 1931 Karachi Congress. A Navjawan Conference was held by the youth organisation of Bhagat Singh which was presided over by

Subhas Bose. Gandhi had to face a black flag demonstration for the first time in his life from a massive rally of the youths for his failure to save the lives of Bhagat Singh and others. Bhagat Singh's father was brought to Karachi with the ashes of the martyrs to pacify the angry youths and for the first time the Congress passed a resolution, in the presence of Gandhi, praising the patriotic sacrifices made by the three martyrs.

BIFURCATION OF WAYS

So long Subhas was in India, non-violence was not the basic issue that divided him from Gandhi. Till he left India in January 1941, he never tried to adopt any violent revolutionary means, discarding the policy of the Gandhian non-violence. Accepting the Gandhian means of non-violent satyagraha as the main weapon for the freedom struggle, he wanted this weapon to be used for giving effect to his strategy of ultimate seizure of power. He hoped that civil disobedience should be pushed to such a stage when a complete administrative vacuum would be created. This vacuum Subhas desired to be filled up at the final phase of the freedom struggle by the organs of a parallel government which would ultimately seize power from the British. He further believed that for such a consummation of civil disobedience, the participation of the Army and the police in it along with the common mass of people were unavoidably necessary in the final phase of the mass struggle. That was why he preferred to use the phrase active resistance in place of passive resistance or peaceful satyagraha of the Gandhian concept.

Gandhi could never agree to any strategy of even non-violent seizure of power by the people even at any final stage of *satyagraha* movement because he feared that such a development was bound to lead to violent uprising of the people and vitiate his means of non-violence. It was out of this apprehension that Gandhi meticulously avoided asking the army and the police to join the civil disobedience movements of 1921 and 1930. Gandhi was very frankly opposed to the technique of seizure of power and, instead, he relied on the process of negotiated settlement with the British for the gradual transfer

of power to Indians. Subhas had no illusions about the efficacy of the Gandhian means to achieve complete independence directly and by any single thrust of a mass movement. In fact, after the 1921 non-cooperation movement, what to speak of achieving 'Swaraj within a year', it could not force the British Government to concede any additional powers to Indians. After the second unique and unprecedented mass movement of 1930 launched by Gandhi, it succeeded only to make the British agree to sit in the Round Table Conference for negotiations on the issue of independence which led to the concession of the India Act, 1935, setting in consequence the stage for the partition of India.

About the strategy of the freedom struggle, Subhas had another major difference with Gandhi. Subhas believed that the method of acquiring gradual concession of political power through negotiations with the British would mean leaving the initiative in their hands for dividing the Indian people, particularly the Hindus and the Muslims. He was convinced that only by resorting to the strategy of seizure of power, the British design to 'divide and rule' could be defeated. The history of political developments in the thirties and forties proved how clear Subhas was in his foresight.

The ways and means of Subhas turned to be completely different from Gandhi only after he escaped from India. In India, he never gave any direct support to violent means or made any attempt to adopt it himself for achieving independence. He had his sympathy for the courage and the spirit of intense patriotism of the revolutionaries, but he never believed that revolutionary terrorism would succeed to achieve independence. But he never tried to dampen the fiery spirit of the revolutionaries as he wanted to keep the option for violent revolutionary means open for its adoption in any opportune circumstances. Unlike Gandhi, Subhas had no absolute reliance in the ethics of non-violent means and non-violence was no absolute creed for him. He adopted the Gandhian means of non-violence because Indian people had no better or more effective alternative before them.

Independence for India by any means and seizing it directly by the people themselves was the maxim of the freedom

struggle with Subhas. When he failed to move Gandhi to avail the opportunity of war by launching an all-out national struggle for achieving complete independence, he decided to try different means—the means of violent and revolutionary overthrow of the British power by utilising the active hostility of the Axis Powers against the British. From January 1941, Subhas adopted the means of freedom struggle, which in its concept, technique, strategy and objective was completely different from the non-violent means of Gandhi. Till that time, Subhas was an aggressive leftist but still following Gandhian non-violent means essentially. And, thereafter, his ways unmistakably became the ways of violent revolution and revolutionary seizure of power. What Subhas achieved in consequence of his revolutionary efforts is known in history as the Azad Hind revolution and in it he emerged as the Netaji of the Indian national revolution. He also emerged as an independent leader pursuing his independent policy completely different from Gandhian means and Gandhian leadership.

CHAPTER 3

Period of Conflict and Contradiction

SUBHAS was not a Gandhiite in the known sense of the term but his appreciation of Gandhi was in no way less sincere and less abiding than many of the known lieutenants of the Mahatma. He knew it quite well what the Mahatma meant for the Indian people. In a short sketch of the Mahatma, Subhas neatly delineated the Indian characteristics of the Gandhian leadership in *The Indian Struggle*. He wrote: "Gandhi would have been, perhaps, treated as a crank had he been born in any Western country," but, according to Subhas, in the background of the heritage of Indian civilization he was raised to the highest status of a mahatma by the Indian people. A political mahatma, as the Indian people found in Gandhi, was a unique phenomenon of the cultural tradition of India. Thus, wrote Subhas in his book : "There is something in Mahatma Gandhi which appeals to the mass of the Indian people . . . His simple life, his vegetarian diet, his goat's milk, his day of silence every week, his habit of squatting on the floor instead of sitting in the chair, his loin-cloth—in fact everything connected with him has marked him out as one of the eccentric mahatmas of old and has brought him nearer to his people. Wherever he goes, even the poorest feels that he is the product of the Indian soil—blood of his blood, flesh of his flesh. When the Mahatma speaks, he does so in a language of the *Bhagvad Gita* and the *Ramayana* . . . when he talks to them Swaraj, . . . he reminds them of the glories of Rama Rajya and they understand. And when he talks of conquering through love and ahimsa, they are reminded of Buddha and Mahavira and they accept him."

With this mahatmic aura around him, Gandhi emerged as the leader of the Indian freedom struggle with "a completely

new outlook, new method and a new philosophy" according to Subhas. Gandhi appeared in the image of a simple mahatma and talked in the simplest language, but he had the gift of an instinct to understand the socio-political situation of India and the mood of his countrymen. He entered into the leadership of the Congress, when it reached a critical stage of transition. With the new programme and new political philosophy, Gandhi was acclaimed as the supreme leader of the Congress and the Indian people. About the secret of his rise into the summit of the Congress leadership, Subhas wrote further : "The success of the Mahatma has been due to the failure of constitutionalism, on the one side, and armed revolution, on the other . . . In 1920, India stood at the crossroads. Constitutionalism was dead ; an armed revolution was sheer madness . . . The country was groping for a new method and looking for a new leader. Then there sprang up India's man of destiny—Mahatma Gandhi. He knew himself, he knew his country's needs and he also knew that during the next phase of India's struggle, the crown of leadership would be on his head. No false sense of modesty troubled him—he spoke with a firm voice and the people obeyed."

"The Indian National Congress today is largely his creation, his handiwork. From a talking body he has converted the Congress into a living and fighting organisation," he added.

Subhas knew clearly that Gandhi was the leader of the Indian national movement and his new method of the non-violent mass movement, which "was not too revolutionary for the majority of his countrymen", was, nevertheless, the most effective means to mobilise the Indian people under the banner of the Congress.

In principle, Subhas broadly accepted Gandhi's leadership as well as his programme of passive resistance as the means for national struggle but not in any way blindly in either case. According to him, Gandhi was the most 'dynamic and progressive force' in 1920, but with the growing momentum of the national movement, he felt, the Gandhian policy and programme needed more radicalisation. It appeared to him that after Gandhi became the unchallengeable leader of the Congress, he often turned to be too much subjective about his programme

and his ethics of non-violence. Most of the Congress leaders were seen to follow Gandhi too uncritically, particularly after passing away of C.R. Das and Motilal Nehru.

After the failure of the 1921 Non-Cooperation Movement, C.R. and Motilal rebelled against the status quoist programme of Gandhi to introduce their Swarajist programme of 'council entry'. They formed the Swarajya Party within the Congress and ultimately succeeded in making Gandhi concede to their programme. Thus, C.R. and Motilal also succeeded in expanding the areas of struggle—struggle inside the legislatures and the local bodies—against the British Government. Subhas also adopted the same tactical line, like his political guru C.R. to maintain a critical attitude towards the Gandhian policy and programme, more aggressively than before.

With the growing pace of the national movement, Subhas felt the necessity of giving a radical orientation to the policy and programme of the Congress. Nehru and some other younger Congress leaders also felt similarly, but none, like Subhas, dared to enter into any direct conflict or confrontation with Gandhi. The line of politics Subhas followed since his release from Mandalay jail in late 1926 became known in the history of the Indian freedom movement as leftism. The role Subhas played in it till January 1941 was the role of an aggressive leftist leader. The principal objectives of his leftism were to hasten the pace of the uncompromising freedom movement, enlarge the organisational base of the Congress to include workers and peasants into it and radicalise the socio-economic and political thinkings of the party by the adoption of socialist ideals as the goal of Indian freedom.

BEGINNING OF LEFTISM

Subhas became a significant political figure from 1927. As a young leader of thirty, with a beaming demeanour of a dynamic Kshatriya who had already been in the British prison half the time since he joined the freedom struggle, he devoted himself to organise the youths and preach the ideals of complete independence and the gospel of Indian Socialism among them. He entered into major conflicts with Gandhi and other senior Congress leaders for the first time in 1928 at the

Calcutta Congress. By Swaraj, the Congress still meant only a dominion status. When a formal resolution was introduced in the Congress session to adopt dominion status as its political objective, Subhas moved an amendment for the adoption of 'complete independence' as its goal. Initially, Nehru was with Subhas in supporting this amendment, but he was finally won over for good by Gandhi from the side of the leftists. Subhas had to fight alone, without Nehru or any other senior leader with him. His amendment was lost in the face of joint opposition by Mahatma Gandhi and all other senior Congress leaders but he succeeded in mustering significant support for his radical political line.

The Calcutta session elected Gandhi as the next president of the Congress, which was to hold its session at Lahore in 1929. However, the Mahatma nominated Nehru as the president of the Lahore Congress in his place. Thereafter, Nehru, who was known earlier as a leftist, no longer identified himself any more with any leftist move inside or outside the Congress.

The Lahore Congress was, in a sense, a triumph for Subhas as it adopted 'complete independence' as the goal of the Congress. But Subhas wanted to move a step ahead and tabled a resolution asking the party to supplement the Gandhian 'constructive programme' by the adoption of a 'socialist programme' along with it. This resolution, which was rejected, annoyed Gandhi and other Gandhiites. Though Nehru, who was still known as a progressive among other Congress leaders, was the president of the Congress, Subhas — the most dynamic youthful leader of the Congress was dropped from the new working committee for his heretic move to question the absolute efficacy of the constructive programme. Along with him was also dropped Srinivas Ayanger for the support he lent to Subhas. Ayanger, a former president of the Congress, thereafter, left politics altogether, but young Subhas accepted this challenge with redoubled vigour. He began to move all around the country to organise students and youths and soon emerged as the principal architect of leftism and the youth movement of India and as its inspiring guide and philosopher.

During this period, Subhas made another new move to

organize the labour movement by leading a workers' strike at Jamshedpur and the railwaymen's strikes at Chandpur, Chittagong and Dacca. He was arrested several times in connection with these labour strikes and was later invited to preside over the conference of the Trade Union Congress in 1931 which was then the united organisation of all the working class people of India. Subhas was the youngest Congress leader of the higher echelon who ever presided over the T.U.C. He particularly used this platform to bring the labour movement nearer to the Congress and expound his ideas about Indian socialism.

Subhas was already in jail when Gandhi started his civil disobedience movement in 1930. He was released later, but while violating the prohibitory order on the 'independence day' in 1931, as the Mayor of Calcutta, he was brutally assaulted by the British mounted police and suffered bleeding injuries. But he still succeeded to raise the National Flag at Calcutta Maidan before he fell unconscious. It was a remarkable instance of patriotic fervour which distinguished him from other Congress leaders.

Subhas was not happy over the Gandhi-Irwin Pact of 1931. Nevertheless, in response to an appeal from Gandhi he did not oppose it publicly. Before Gandhi left for the London Round Table Conference, Subhas along with Dr. Ansari and Mr. Sherwani, two respected Congress leaders of those days, made a request to Gandhi not to enter into any dialogue with the British Government on communal issues till they conceded the principal demand of independence. But Gandhi allowed him to be entangled into the quandary of an interminable dialogue with Muslim leaders on communal issues before the main political issue could be raised at all. The conference ended, in consequence, in a fiasco for the Congress but it proved to be a great triumph for the Muslim League and the British Government, because the verdict of the communal award succeeded in permanently estranging the Muslim community from the Hindus by more rigorously introducing the system of separate electorate.

Gandhi returned to India as a frustrated man. Before he could resume the struggle again, he was arrested and imprisoned. Spontaneous civil disobedience and no tax campaigns

broke out all over the country, but the movement practically died down after a few months. Gandhi undertook two fasts, one to oppose the 'separate electorate' for the Scheduled Castes and the other for 21 days, for self-purification. After the second fast, Gandhi was released. He gave up political activities for about a year to devote himself completely to the Harijan upliftment work. In October 1934, Gandhi as the sole 'dictator' of the Congress withdrew the civil disobedience movement. His main activities were now cencentrated on Harijan problems. Most of the Gandhiites in the Congress followed him and the result was that the political activities of the Congress practically ceased for quite some time.

REACTION OF SUBHAS

The withdrawal of the civil disobedience movement and the diversion of the attention of the Congressmen to the reformist programme for the removal of untouchability led to the development of a situation of all-round frustration among the Congressmen, particularly for the younger people. Gandhi was subjected to adverse criticism from different quarters. Even Nehru expressed his anger against Gandhi through a series of correspondences with him. But he did not take any defiant step to oppose Gandhi or chalk out any new line of action for Congressmen to follow. Younger Congress leaders began to move to adopt a radical programme for the Congress by forming an organisation inside the Congress, calling it the Congress Socialist Party. Acharya Narendra Dev, Sampurnanand, Jayaprakash Narayan and many other radical Congressmen spearheaded this socialist movement inside the Congress. The politics of Gandhi and his programme became the target of their criticism during this period.

Subhas was then living at Vienna as a political exile. His criticism against the leadership and a programme of Gandhi appeared to be the sharpest and even very pungent. Vithalbhai Patel shared the views of Subhas and both of them issued a joint statement on May 9, 1934, which said : "The events of the last 13 years have demonstrated that a political warfare based on the principles of maximum suffering for ourselves and minimum suffering for our opponents cannot possibly

lead to success. It is futile to expect that we can ever bring about a change of heart in our rulers merely through our own suffering or trying to love them. And the latest action of Mahatma Gandhi in suspending the civil disobedience movement is a confession of failure so far as the present method of the Congress is concerned. We are clearly of the opinion that, as a political leader, Mahatma Gandhi has failed. The time has, therefore, come for a radical reorganisation of the Congress on a new principle and with a new method. For . . . this . . . a change of leadership is necessary . . . and a new party will have to be formed within the Congress, composed of all radical elements." However, both the leaders emphasised that the "non-cooperation movement cannot be given up, but the form of non-cooperation will have to be changed into a more militant one, and the fight for freedom is to be waged on all fronts."

Vithalbhai Patel was the only top-ranking Congress leader whose whole hearted support Subhas got after the death of C.R. Das. But, Vithalbhai passed away, soon leaving him alone to fight for his political line inside the Congress.

During this period, youthful Subhas was seen to be rather very unsparing in his criticism of the Gandhian programme and leadership. He even felt that Gandhi failed to lead the freedom movement. Tracing the causes for the failure of the Gandhian leadership, Subhas wrote in *The Indian Struggle* which was published in November 1934 : "With such purity of character and with such an unprecedented following, why has the Mahatma failed to liberate India ? He has failed because the strength of a leader depends not only on the largeness but on the character of one's following. He has failed because while he has understood the character of his people, he has not understood the character of his opponents. The logic of the Mahatma is not the logic which appeals to John Bull. He has failed because his policy of putting all his cards on the table will not do. We have to render unto Caesar what is Ceasar's and in a political fight, the art of diplomacy cannot be dispensed with. He has failed because he has not made use of the international weapon. If we desire to win freedom through non-violence, diplomacy and international propaganda

are essential . . . Last, but not least, the Mahatma has failed because he had to play a dual role in one person—the role of a leader of an enslaved people and that of a world teacher, who has a new doctrine to preach. It is this duality which has made him at once the irreconcilable foe of the Englishmen, according to Mr. Winston Churchill, and the best policeman of the Englishmen according to Miss Wilkinson." Miss Wilkinson was a British M.P. and known as a friend of India.

Subhas further questioned, "Will the Mahatma be able to emancipate his dear country ?" Raising this crucial issue, he wrote, "Mahatma Gandhi's political supremacy will remain unchallenged . . . He will not play second fiddle to others . . . in spite of the unparalleled popularity and reputation which the Mahatma has among his countrymen and will continue to have, regardless of his future political career, there is no doubt that the unique position of the Mahatma is due to his political leadership." However, Subhas concluded too forthrightly : "Mahatma Gandhi has rendered and will continue to render phenomenal service to his country. But India's salvation will not be achieved under his leadership."

Subhas thought that after the failure of the 1930-32 civil disobedience movement, it was necessary to build up a new party within the Congress "based on economic issues", which should conduct "political struggle and social struggle simultaneously". He further wrote in *The Indian Struggle* : "The party, that will win political freedom for India, will also be the party that will win social and economic freedom for the masses." He wanted to name this party as Samyavadi Sangh which he expected to assume the role of a left-wing socialist party, standing for "the interest of the masses, i.e., of the peasants, workers, etc. and not for the vested interests, i.e., the landlords, capitalists and money-lending classes."

Subhas was seen to be ceaselessly outspoken in 1934 in his criticism of the Gandhian politics. Others who founded the Socialist Party within the Congress also felt equally though not as sharply as Subhas. Thousands of radical Congressmen, particularly from the younger section, joined this new party. Subhas desired to be with it, but, according to Jayaprakash

Narayan, he was advised to keep out of it in order to play his role more effectively as an independent national leader of the left-wing inside the Congress. However, the new party, though started with a great promise, could not grow into an aggressive left-wing party of Subhas Bose's concept as it could not ultimately develop its independent fighting character outside the influences of Mahatma Gandhi or the Fabian socialist outlook of Pandit Nehru.

UNCHALLENGED LEADER

Gandhi faced all criticism against him by Subhas and the Congress Socialists completely unperturbed. He knew the mind of the Indian people and his position among them. As an astute organiser of the mass movement, he knew quite well that the political programme of 1930 and 1932 movements could hardly be revived any more to enthuse the people's participation in it. Hardline political activities were not possible after the failure of the civil disobedience movement. But Gandhi, at the same time, did not want to leave the Congressmen in any vacuum. He, therefore, offered a politically innocuous but socially very important programme of the removal of untouchability and Harijan uplift to them.

Facing volumes of criticism of Subhas, of the Congress Socialist leaders and even of Nehru about his philosophy of non-violence and the Gandhian programme, the Mahatma was found to take a very firm stand in justification of his political faith. He urged Congressmen to repose greater trust in non-violence. Non-violence was adopted by the Congress as a 'policy', but now he urged for its adoption as a 'creed'. Gandhi further, found that corruption in the enrolment of members to the Congress widely weakened the moral basis of the party. He, therefore, suggested two fundamental changes in the constitution of the Congress—firstly, to replace the existing clause of "by the peaceful and legitimate means" in the Congress constitution regarding the ways of the freedom struggle by "non-violent and truthful means" ; and secondly, to drop the four-anna membership of the Congress and introduce, instead, an equivalent amount of khadi, handspun by each member, as the membership fee.

From the standpoint of Gandhian philosophy, both these changes suggested by him were very vital, but even the Gandhiites like Patel, Nehru and many others declined to accept these recommendations for changing the Congress Constitution. They also did not agree to accept non-violence as the 'creed' of the Congress, but preferred to retain it as a 'policy'. Gandhi felt very unhappy, and took a fateful decision not to enroll himself any more as a member of the Congress. Since 1934, Gandhi was never a formal member of the Congress but still he continued to be its indisputable leader and the supreme leader of all the national movements launched by the Congress —even thereafter.

The formal withdrawal of the Mahatma from the Congress organization was a kind of his challenging answer to the criticism made against his leadership by Subhas and the Congress socialists particularly. He allowed them a free hand to develop their own leadership within the Congress and propagate their radical views from its platform.

Gandhi had an amazing capacity to move with the time. In the early thirties, he never sympathised with the socialist principles. He steadfastly struck to his own line of non-violent methods and constructive programme. But he never publicly opposed the socialist views of Subhas, Nehru or the Congress socialists; on the contrary, he allowed them from the early thirties to preach their ideals quite freely from the Congress platform. This liberal attitude of Gandhi and his personal affection for the socialist leaders ultimately helped him to win the confidence of the Congress Socialist Party. Nehru, on occasions, gave expression to some non-conformist views, but he never acted, in any ways, in opposition to the Gandhian policy or programme. Strangely, Gandhi remained silent over the criticism of Subhas also, which appeared rather as very brusque in 1934. He maintained a somewhat stoic attitude towards all criticisms against him after the failure of the 1930 and 1932 mass movements.

GANDHI-SUBHAS AMITY

Subhas fully recovered from his illness by 1933 and became impatient to return to India after 1934 but he was not permitted

by the British Government. He was in virtual exile in Europe for over five years, where he devoted his time and energy to establish contacts with political leaders of the various European countries, make propaganda for the cause of India's independence and set up 'India centres' in various capital cities of Europe for cultivating friendship of the Western people in support of his country's independence. He returned to India in April 1936 violating the British ban, when he was immediately arrested and kept interned for about an year.

Coming back to India, Subhas was surprised to find that instead of the erosion of the Gandhian influence over the Congress and the people, it increased enormously. Gandhi was not a member of the Congress any more,—nevertheless, the Congress could hardly do anything important without Gandhi. As a realist, Subhas adjusted himself with this Gandhian milieu and ceased to make any further criticism of the leadership of the Mahatma.

Gandhi twice stalled Subhas from becoming the president of the Congress, although Nehru was nominated to this office by him thrice. This fact Gandhi himself revealed publicly in 1946. Why was he so opposed to Subhas ? Was it because he refused to abide by the Gandhian advice to support the Congress resolution on dominion status in the 1928 Calcutta Congress ? Or, was it for the reason of his advocacy for the socialist programme in 1929 Lahore Congress ? Could it be the reason for his attack on the Gandhian leadership from Europe? Or, was it that Gandhi suspected him to entertain revolutionary objectives as Subhas had his close association with the revolutionaries of Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab ? Or, did he find Subhas to be too defiant about his policy and programme ? Mahatma Gandhi never explained clearly why he disliked Subhas and prevented him from becoming the president of the Congress earlier.

However, in 1937 the Gandhian attitude towards Subhas changed. No other Congress leader suffered such brutal persecution at the hands of the Britishers as Subhas did. He was in politics for 18 years since 1920 and out of it for nearly 11 years he had either been in prison or in exile. Twice he was physically assaulted by the British police to suffer bleeding injuries. For

his indomitable courage and immense sacrifices and sufferings and his progressive views, Subhas appeared in the image of an idol of worship before the Indian youths. At the zenith of his popularity in 1937, Subhas visibly excelled even Nehru. Gandhi thought that it would be unwise for him any more not to recognize the people's adoration for Subhas. Gandhi, therefore, nominated Subhas as the president of the 1938 Haripura Congress. Gandhi, perhaps, hoped to win over Subhas like Nehru by elevating him to the highest office in the party.

For about a year, after Subhas became the president of the Congress, he had no clash or conflict with Gandhi or with any other senior Congress leader. He pulled well with all of them. His main achievement, as the president of the Congress, was to popularise his ideas about economic planning and set up the first National Planning Committee of India. Indeed, the concept of planned economy and its pioneering organisational set-up was the gift of Subhas to his countrymen. Gandhi, in the thirties, did not favour the idea of economic planning as he feared that it would ultimately harm the course of his khadi economy. Subhas knew the mind of Gandhi and, to obviate the Gandhian opposition to his move for setting up the planning committee, he very tactfuly succeeded to involve Nehru in it by making him its chairman. Gandhi was known to be tolerant about Nehru much more than Subhas, and, as such, although he intensely disliked the idea of planned economy in 1938, he did not frontally oppose the committee, now headed by Nehru.

CONFRONTATION AGAIN

Subhas took the fateful decision to contest for the presidentship of the Tripuri Congress, although Gandhi was not inclined to support him. Nehru was elected Congress president thrice ; why could not Subhas then continue for the second term ? But this was not the reason behind the decision of Subhas. He was quite sure, according to information he received from his international contacts, that world war was almost certainly going to break out in Europe during 1939. He also developed a suspicion, on the basis of some dubious moves made by a few senior Congress leaders, that the question

of the acceptance of the federation scheme of the India Act, 1935, was being seriously considered by them behind the back of the Congress Working Committee. Subhas was determined to utilise the international situation for securing India's freedom. He, therefore, decided to stand for the presidentship of the Congress in a bid to stall any move to accept the federation and, thus, enter into a compromise with the British Government, on the one hand, and take advantage of the developing international crisis for India's freedom, on the other.

Why did Gandhi not like Subhas to become the president of the Congress for the second term is still a mystery. Was it because Subhas did not prove to be as pliable and as submissive as it happened to be the case with Nehru after he was elected president of the Lahore Congress in place of Gandhi himself ? Whatever might be the reason, Subhas had to face an all-out opposition from Gandhi after defeating Dr. Sitaramayya, the Gandhian nominee for the presidentship of the Tripuri Congress. Since 1928, Gandhi's choice for the Congress presidentship was considered as final. It was for the first time that his nomination was challenged by Subhas who was elected president of the Tripuri Congress through the process of democratic election.

If the remarks made by Subhas from Europe against Gandhi after the withdrawal of the 1930-32 civil disobedience movement seemed somewhat overbearing, Gandhi's behaviour and his political attitude towards Subhas too appeared as quite un-Gandhian and unseemly of the Mahatma. Gandhi did not say anything before Dr. Sitaramayya's defeat that the contest involved any basic issues for him, or he considered Subhas's candidature in any way a challenge to his leadership. But after the defeat of his nominee, Gandhi sprang a shocking surprise by making an astounding statement. He said : "The defeat is more mine than his (Sitaramayya's) . . . I am nothing if I do not represent the definite principles and policies. Therefore, it is plain to me that the delegates do not approve of the principles and policies for which I stand." Then he made a most unbecoming comment about Subhas saying : "After all, Subhas Babu is not an enemy of the country."

Before the Tripuri contest, Gandhi never said that it involved any question of 'principles and policies'. It remained quite inexplicable to the historians why the Mahatma viewed the victory of Subhas as any rejection of his 'principles and policies' and as a challenge to his leadership. However, it appeared from all his subsequent actions that Gandhi was not going to spare Subhas for disobeying him. He took a rigid stand against the left-wing politics of Subhas. He resolved either to oust Subhas politically or make him bend.

Subhas attended the Tripuri Congress as the newly elected president while he was running a temperature of 104 degrees F. He ignored all warnings by the most eminent doctors of Calcutta, who advised him not to undertake an extremely hazardous, long journey from Calcutta to Tripuri. Subhas was then very anxious to come to an understanding with the Mahatma during this session of the Congress. But Gandhi kept away from it for a cause which was much less important than the necessity of his presence in this critical session of the Congress. The attention of the delegates to the Congress session was focussed naturally on the Mahatma who was on a fast in Rajkot, a place not very far from Tripuri. In such a delicate situation, senior leaders of the Congress, including Nehru, posed the issue before the delegates to the session as if it was the question of a choice of leadership of either Mahatma Gandhi or Subhas Bose. All the senior Congress leaders and the ministers of all Congress-ruled provinces arrayed themselves in solid phalanx against the ailing president of the Congress. 'Gandhi or Bose' was their political slogan, which tactically proved to be of much advantage to them for weaning away support from Subhas. Even the Congress socialists, who voted for Subhas at the time of the presidential contest, deserted him at Tripuri.

ULTIMATUM TO BRITAIN

Subhas was, however, not found to express any lack of confidence in the leadership of Gandhi. In his presidential address, he sought the "fullest guidance and co-operation of Mahatma Gandhi." His address was very brief and in it he made a masterly analysis of the international situation, hinting

in it and saying to his close friends in unmistakable words that he expected the world war to break out within six months. He felt extremely anxious to avail the growing international crisis for winning India's freedom. Subhas said in his address : " . . . the time has come for us to raise the issue of Swaraj and submit our national demand to the British Government in the form of an ultimatum" and then start "mass civil disobedience or satyagraha." In a passionate appeal, he told the delegates : "What more oppportune moment could we find in our national history for a final advance in the direction of Swaraj, particularly when the international situation is favourable to us ? . . . Speaking as a cold-blooded realist, I may say . . . if only we sink our differences, pool our resources and pull our full weight in the national struggle, we can make our attack on the British imperialism irresistible. Shall we have the political foresight to make the most out of the present favourable position or shall we miss the opportunity, which is a rare opportunity in the lifetime of a nation ?"

The Congress president was too ill to attend either the delegates session or the open session of the Congress. His address was read out by his elder brother, Sarat Chandra Bose.

But this appeal of the seriously ailing Subhas had no effect on senior Congress leaders. They were dead set to avenge their defeat in the presidential contest. They even went on saying among the delegates that Subhas was feigning illness for earning their sympathy. They passed a patently unconstitutional resolution binding the hands of the Congress President by giving him a directive to choose the new working committee on the advice of Mahatma Gandhi. So long, it was the prerogative of the president to choose his own team of the working committee, but now Gandhi was given its over-riding powers.

It appeared that the Tripuri resolution was a kind of a first move for the ultimate 'political liquidation' of the rebel president of the Congress. Surprisingly, the Mahatma agreed to accept the responsibility of implementing the Tripuri resolution, which was patently against the letter and the spirit of the party constitution.

Even before the Tripuri session, almost all senior Congress

leaders had resigned from the working committee, obviously after consulting Gandhi. It became clear to Subhas that without the consent of Gandhi none of them would agree to serve in the new working committee. During and after the Tripuri crisis, Subhas had not the faintest desire to challenge the leadership of Gandhi. What he wanted was to draw his attention and that of the other Congress leaders regarding the necessity of preparing the country for a national struggle when, as he thought, "the time was ripe for it."

Subhas knew it for certain that Gandhi was the real leader of the Congress and of the country. He made every effort to conciliate with Gandhi in choosing the members of the working committee. In order to sincerely assuage the injured feelings of Gandhi, Subhas wrote to him: "It will always be my aim and object to try and win Gandhi's confidence for the simple reason that it will be a tragic thing for me if I succeed in winning the confidence of other people but fail to win the confidence of India's greatest man."

However, Gandhi was unbending. He was not to accommodate the views of Subhas in any way. On the plea of the formation of a homogeneous working committee, Subhas was asked either to accept the working committee as nominated by Gandhi or choose his own cabinet himself minus Nehru, Patel, Azad, Rajendra Prasad, Kripalani and others. Gandhi was not prepared to concede even one general secretary of the choice of the democratically elected president of the Congress, whose prerogative it was, according to the party constitution, to nominate his working committee and its office-bearers. Gandhi adopted virtually a kind of an unconcealed vindictive attitude towards Subhas as if to teach him a political lesson. Subhas had two alternatives before him—either to push the Congress to a split or resign. In his patriotic wisdom to save the national organisation of the Indian people from splitting, as it had happened once in 1908 Surat Congress, Subhas preferred to resign.

For about a year, before Subhas escaped from India, according to one of his biographers, unsparing attempts were made at the "non-violent liquidation" of Subhas. Not only Gandhi but all his close associates, then known as Gandhiites, made every effort to oppose and crush Subhas politically. The

twice elected president of the Congress was even expelled from the Congress on rather an unprecedented tenuous charge of violation of a directive of the Congress president, who succeeded Subhas after his resignation. This directive asked Congressmen not to publicly criticise Congress ministries—a kind of such discipline the Congress was never known to have practised in the past. Most astonishingly, this expulsion resolution was drafted by Gandhi himself.

It became clear to everybody in those days that whatever step was taken against Subhas by the Gandhiites, whom the leftwingers then used to call the 'rightists', was taken either in consultation with Gandhi or directly by Gandhi himself. Gandhi had never been so unsparing, so ruthless in his attitude towards any other non-conformist at any time before. Subhas did not oppose any known major policy or programme of the Mahatma. He only urged for an immediate resumption of the national struggle for securing India's freedom at a time when the international and national situations appeared to have had become very ripe, according to him. Nevertheless, why Gandhi adopted an unbelievably stringent attitude towards Subhas? For about two years from the defeat of Dr Sitaramayya, the Gandhian nominee, Subhas faced total and relentless opposition from Gandhi.

It remains a mystery why Gandhi behaved in such an overtly un-Gandhian way towards Subhas. It is difficult to explain the attitude of the Mahatma of the phase of the freedom movement unless a philosophical or mystical justification is sought for it. Perhaps, the Mahatma was unconsciously ordained by the will of the Providence to throw Subhas into an ordeal of fire and fury to emerge in the future as the epic hero of Indian freedom. If Gandhi agreed to conciliate with Subhas, Subhas could at best be recognized in the history of Indian freedom as a leader next to Gandhi. It was indeed the merciless attitude of Gandhi towards Subhas that made him ultimately plunge into the cauldron of the world war to spring out of it as the Netaji of the Indian people, as the greatest anti-imperialist crusader and as the mighty emblem of the highest concept of revolutionary idealism in the modern history of the mankind.

WAR OPPORTUNITY

Subhas was made up of a stuff completely different from other Congress leaders. He had no personal ambition of his own—the mission of India's freedom he pledged himself to fulfil was the elan vital of his life. He never knew how to submit under pressure or threat. He thrived more brilliantly in adversities and through struggles and sufferings than sailing smoothly. As a stormy petrel, as he was known to be, he was destined to fulfil something greater for his country and for the ideal he cherished unyieldingly.

After resigning from the office of the Congress presidentship, he formed an organisation within Congress, called the Forward Bloc. He did not want to develop it as an organisation parallel to the Congress, but wanted it to act as a promoter of the national struggle from within the Congress. With his extraordinary organising ability, he succeeded in setting up its branches all over the country within a very short time to propagate his views about the urgency of availing the international crisis for achieving independence.

World War II broke out exactly within six months after the Tripuri Congress as prophesied earlier by Subhas. He became extremely anxious to utilize this golden opportunity for the cause of the national emancipation of his motherland. Subhas forgot everything of the ugly episode of the Tripuri Congress and the harsh treatment he received from the Mahatma and other Congress leaders. He rushed to Gandhi to plead with him to seize this war opportunity but, to his utter dismay, Subhas found no response from the Mahatma.

After the outbreak of the war, Gandhi said publicly : "Strange as it may appear, my sympathies are wholly with the Allies." Nehru expressed similar views and more vigorously. Subhas had no alternative but to start a nation-wide campaign to rouse public opinion for exerting pressure on Gandhi to start an immediate national struggle. But Gandhi's reply to Subhas was: "If any mass movement is undertaken at the present moment in the name of non-violence, it will resolve into violence—largely unorganised." Later, opposing the move of Subhas, Gandhi stated most categorically on November 6, 1939: "I will resist civil disobedience unless I find the country

prepared for it." Two days later, he further said : "There can be no civil resistance so long as the Viceroy is exploring the possibilities of a settlement, the Muslim League blocks the way and there is indiscipline and disunity in the Congress ranks." On January 20, 1940, Gandhi wrote again in the *Harijan* : "I am not spoiling for a fight, I am trying to avoid it. . . I wholly endorse Subhas Babu's charge that I am eager to have a compromise with Britain if it can be had with honour. Indeed, satyagraha demands it . . . I have not lost faith in Britain."

It was obvious that Gandhi and Congress leaders were making every effort to arrive at a compromise with the British Government on the issue of India's freedom although Britain was facing reverse after reverse at the hands of the Nazis in those days. In March 1940, the Congress had its annual session at Ramgarh in Bihar. Subhas also organised simultaneously an 'anti-compromise conference' at the same place. By all accounts, the conference was a much bigger show than the Congress session. But it created no impression on Gandhi or Netaji. Gandhi and the Congress leadership went on exploring the possibilities of a compromise with the British Government.

With his characteristic dash and dynamism, Subhas moved to every corner of the country to mobilise public opinion in favour of an 'immediate national struggle.' He was anxious to hit the British Government at a time when it was facing a worst crisis for its survival. For Subhas it was the most opportune moment for winning India's war of independence. During this period, his signed articles appeared in his organ, '*Forward Bloc*' every week. Each of these articles was a masterpiece of political polemics. These superb writings of Subhas could be compared only with the writing of Gandhi in the *Harijan*, although the style and tenor of the writings of Gandhi were different from the fire-eating phrases of Subhas. Each of these signed editorials reflected the intensity of the anxiety of Subhas over the passivity of the Congress and his passionate desire for seizing the opportunity for the cause of India. In an article, headlined 'Wake Up, India!' Subhas wrote on May 11, 1940: "Events in Europe are rapidly heading towards a crisis. Our leaders talked and talked, argued and argued as months

rolled by. Nothing effective was done and the spring of 1940 arrived. With the breath of spring, the military activities of the Germans assumed an aggressive form. One fine morning, Denmark was occupied and Norway was invaded. Germany struck with lightning speed. The Allies were surprised and outmanoeuvred.

"Holland has now been invaded and will probably be over-run in no time. What more surprises are in store for us nobody can tell. People are talking of a Japanese attack on the Dutch East Indies. The Italian Army seems to be getting ready for the fray. . . The Cabinet in London is tottering after the debacle in Norway. But what is India doing ? What is the Indian National Congress doing ?. . . The Congress High Command is undecided. . . its attitude of doubt and vacillation is proving. . . demoralising to a degree.

"How can we save our country from this political rut, utilize the international crisis to India's advantage and win freedom for ourselves ? This is the supreme problem for the hour.

"As every day passes, one feels like biting his fingers in helpless agony. Can nothing be done to save India even at this late hour ? Will not the enslaved people of India cast off their lethargy, sink their petty differences and stand up as one man to demand liberty for this great and ancient land ?

"We are prepared to play our humble part at this critical juncture....Let the supreme executive of the Congress call upon the nation to resume the struggle. We shall then fall in line with them in that great and noble task. Unity within the Congress could be achieved on the basis of a dynamic programme of national struggle.

"When Europe is in the melting-pot, who can withstand the united demand of 350 million Indians. Freedom is now almost within reach. We have to seize it with our united strength. Shall we do so ?"

In reply to such a stirring appeal by Subhas for unity and action to Gandhi and the Congress to lead the nation to launch the final struggle for India's liberation, a week later Gandhi said in a statement, "We do not seek our independence out of Britain's ruin. That is not the way of non-

violence." Nehru followed the Mahatma to say even more emphatically: "Launching of a civil disobedience campaign at a time when Britain is engaged in a life and death struggle would be an act derogatory to India's honour." How strangely could it be an honourable voice of a nation humbled under a hundred years of ignominous slavery of Britain!

[LAST APPEAL]

Subhas was deeply convinced from within that "destiny has forced" him "to act as the spearhead of the struggle and the vanguard of the nationai army." However, he knew that Gandhi was the 'man of destiny' of the Indian people and he was quite conscious that if a call for national struggle was given by Gandhi and the united Congress, the response would be different from the lonely effort made by him and his Forward Bloc. About three months after the Ramgarh Anti-Compromise Conference and immediately after the Nagpur Forward Bloc Conference in June 1940, Subhas went to Wardha to make his last fervent pleading with Gandhi. It proved futile. However, the Mahatma treated Subhas with great affection and in deep regard. He received all warmth and love from mother Kasturba, particularly.

According to an account of Nathalal Parekh, who was present during the Gandhi-Bose meeting: "Subhas said, 'Bapu' if you give a call, the whole nation will respond to it.' Gandhi replied, 'Even if the nation is ready, at a moment like this, I must not do anything that is inopportune.' Subhas said, 'If you think that the moment is inopportune, I want your blessings for starting such a movement.'

"Gandhi : 'You don't need my blessings, Subhas ! How can I bless a movement which I consider inopportune ? You have got the quality of a great leader, and if your conscience tells you that it is the best time for striking out, go ahead and do your best. If you come out successful, I shall be the first to congratulate you."

This was the last meeting between Gandhi and Subhas.

Subhas returned from Wardha in a mood of deep heart-searching. Will he begin the Gandhian civil disobedience movement without Gandhi ? He was then possessed with the feeling of a nission—a mission for India's freedom. He took

the final decision to start the movement alone and lead a *morcha* on July 3, 1940, calling it 'Sirajuddaulah Day' for the removal of the Hollwell Monument which stood as a black spot of blasphemy against the last independent ruler of Bengal. He was arrested a day before and his arrest was followed by a mass movement and prompt removal of Hollwell Monument by the Fazlul Huq Government.

Subhas thought that his arrest will spark off a nation-wide agitation. Thousands of his followers were arrested in Bengal and in other provinces but the agitation failed to assume the dimension of a national movement. Subhas had received tumultuous ovation everywhere in India in the course of his whirlwind campaign for the immediate resumption of a national struggle. But in the final hour of his bidding for national action, they did not come forward to support him. In his utter disappointment, Subhas realised that without the 'Old Man—the Mahatma of the Indian people,' the country will not move.

For Subhas it was the last trial for the efficacy of the Gandhian technique of non-violent mass movement. But without Gandhi, the Gandhian technique did not work. Now he thought of the alternative technique, the technique of revolutionary seizure of power by waging a revolutionary war from outside with the help of the Axis Powers—the inveterate enemy of Britain. He realised that it was near impossible for him to secure his release from jail, when Britain was fighting precariously for her own survival. For three months he engaged himself in prayer and meditation in the solitary cell of Calcutta Presidency Jail and, on the Kali Puja day in 1940, he took the vow to go on a fast unto death for securing his release or die a martyr's death in his attempt to fulfil his mission. He felt that his death will not go in vain. What he failed in life, he will fulfil it with death. His death will rouse the conscience of Gandhi to realise why he rebelled against him!

He wrote a long letter to the Government. It was not a letter. It was like the will of a pilgrim in him—a testament of his revolutionary idealism. In it he wrote in the conclusion:

"In this mortal world everything perishes, and will perish, but ideas, ideals and dreams do not. One individual may die

for an idea, but the idea will, after his death, incarnate itself into a thousand lives. That is how the wheel of evolution moves on, and the ideas, ideals and dreams of one generation are bequeathed to the next. No idea has ever fulfilled itself in this world except through an ordeal of suffering and sacrifice.

"What greater solace can there be than the feeling that one has lived and died for a principle. What greater satisfaction can a man possess than the knowledge that his spirit will beget kindred spirits to carry on his unfinished task. What better reward can a soul desire than the certainty that his message will be wafted over hills and dales, and over the broad plains, to every corner of his land and across the seas to distant lands ? What higher consummation can life attain than a peaceful self-immolation at the altar of one's cause ?

"Hence, it is evident that nobody can lose through suffering and sacrifice. If he does lose anything on the earth, he will gain much more by becoming a heir of a life immortal. This is the technique of soul. The individual must die, so that the nation may live, and may win freedom and glory."

This was not a political letter of a common politician. The British Government understood its meaning and realised what volcanic upsurge will follow if the fasting Subhas died in the British prison. The Government released him on December 5, 1940, and detained him in his Elgin Road residence in Calcutta. The police kept a day-and-night watch on him, waiting to take him back to jail as soon as he recouped his broken health. Subhas remained totally confined in his room donned in a saffron robe, devoting himself to prayer and meditation and, in between, planning for his next move. He met selected invitees in his secluded room, every one of whom gathered an impression as if Subhas was preparing to renounce the world, as he once did in his youth.

When Subhas undertook the fast unto death inside the Presidency Jail, Gandhi kept silent. He did not say a word asking the Government to release him. When he was released and detained in his house, Gandhi sent his secretary, Mahadev Desai, to enquire about his health. However, the Mahatma's political attitude to Subhas remained unchanged and irreconcilable. A prominent personality of Calcutta pleaded with

Gandhi in a telegram, without the knowledge of Subhas, to withdraw the disciplinary measure against the 'Bose brothers' (Subhas and Sarat Chandra) in the interest of the unity in the Congress ranks. But Gandhi replied harshly:

"Wardhaganj, 28.1.41

"Regret Inability, Even Unwillingness, To Interfere Notwithstanding My Regard And Friendship For the Brothers. Feel Ban Cannot Be Lifted Without Their Apologising For Indiscipline.

Bapu"

This telegram of Gandhi pained Subhas very much but he commented on it in his characteristic dignity:

"I learnt the lesson from my political Guru, Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das, who is now no more, that personal relations should, as far as humanly possible, be kept above political differences. I have, therefore, been able to cherish deep personal regard and love for Mahatma Gandhi, despite all that I have suffered and am suffering at the hands of Gandhiites.

"At School I once read a poem on William Tell, the greatest hero of Switzerland—

My knees shall bend, he calmly said
To God and God alone,
My life in the Austrians' hands
My conscience is my own.

"I am not aware of any wrong that I have committed in my political career. Consequently, my reply to the Mahatma will be on the above lines with a few verbal changes."

On January 16, 1941, Subhas made his historic escape, breaking the rigorous dragnet of the mightiest imperialist power cast around him. It was the greatest escape of a revolutionary the history of the world ever recorded. A man alone, absolutely alone, plunged incognito into unknown—a perilous unknown—in pursuit of his national mission. The world came to know about it on January 26, the Independence Day of the enslaved India.

Gandhi was startled by the news flashed under big headlines in all the dailies of India that "Subhas Bose is missing." He anxiously sent a telegram to Sarat Bose:

"Startling news about Subhas. Please wire truth. Anxious.

Hope all well." But the Mahatma received only misleading reply from him, as he was instructed to do so by his younger brother. Sarat Bose knew the destination of Subhas but he did not disclose it to anyone. He wired back to Gandhi:

"We as much in dark as public about Subhas's whereabouts and intentions, and even the exact time of leaving. No news in spite of best efforts for last three days. Circumstances indicate renunciation."

January 16, 1941, remained to be remembered as the most poignant day in the history of relationship between Gandhi and Subhas, on this day ended all conflicts, all clashes and all confrontations between Gandhi and Subhas for good. Subhas left Gandhi undisturbed to go his own way. He chose his own way--a way different from the Gandhian way—to fulfil the mission of India's liberation.

CHAPTER 4

Open Rebellion

THE war and how to seize an opportunity for the liberation of the motherland was constantly haunting the mind of Subhas. But he realized that without Gandhi nothing effective could be done from inside the country, he realized that 'Gandhi is India'. But, was not India greater than Gandhi or Subhas ? Was not the mission of the liberation of the motherland greater than anything else ? Subhas always felt the pulsation of an 'Indian pilgrim' living in him. How could such a pilgrim be swayed by any rancour against Gandhi?

Subhas had already taken the decision to stake everything to fulfil his mission of national liberation and, for that, to leave India. Before he plunged into the unknown peril, he thought of re-establishing a fresh rapport with Gandhi. The individual satyagraha had already been started by Gandhi in late 1940 while Subhas was in prison. Howsoever taken of a national struggle it was, Subhas wanted to avail it to recreate a new national climate for the consolidation and unification of the freedom struggle under the leadership of Gandhi. He did not want to leave India—leave behind a shadow of disunity and bitterness between him and Gandhi.

In this state of patriotic mind, he wrote to Gandhi in December 1940 immediately after his removal under police custody from Presidency Jail to his Elgin Road house. He made an unconditional offer to Gandhi for participation of the followers of his Forward Bloc in the Individual Satyagraha launched by him. In his reply, Gandhi wrote back to Subhas on December 29, 1940: "You are irrepressible whether ill or well. Do get well before going in for fireworks . . . As for your Forward Bloc joining civil disobedience, I think, with the fundamental difference between you and me, it is not possible till one is converted to other's view. We must sail in different

boats, though their destination may appear, but only appear, to be the same."

Gandhi's reply hurt Subhas, but he was not dismayed. Gandhi was bent on to pursue his own political line of 'no-compromise' with Subhas. But the mind of the Indian pilgrim in Subhas was now working at a different level. He still continued to make an effort to assuage the injured feeling of Gandhi. In a very conciliatory tone, full of fervent pleading for the unity of the freedom fighters, he wrote to Gandhi again: "As you are aware that in previous struggles many worked shoulder to shoulder with ardent Gandhiites while differing from them on several important questions. Why should not this happen again ? I beg of you to reconsider your decision . . . you have said, ' . . . till one of us is converted to other's view, we must sail in different boats, though their destination may appear, but only appear, to be the same.' Does this mean that in your view our political goals are different ? Kindly tell me what exactly you mean." [*My Uncle*: *Asoke Bose*].

This letter Subhas wrote to Gandhi on January 10, 1944—only six days before he made his 'great escape' from India. This was the last letter of Subhas to Gandhi, it was his last appeal to the Mahatma for the unity of freedom fighters from the soil of India.

Gandhi received this letter a month after Subhas escaped. It happened so because of the interception of the letter by the police. Gandhi could not reply to it, but he did reply a year and a half later, not in written words but in the form of a historic action. Gandhi's reply was his gift of the great 'August rebellion' to Subhas. Thereafter, Gandhi began to sail, essentially, not in any boat different from Subhas.

GANDHI CONQUERED

What Subhas failed to do while he was in India, he achieved it splendidly by his daring escape from the country. This act of total self-abnegation of Subhas and the complete consecration of his self to his mission startled Gandhi and this changed the whole perspective of Gandhi about Subhas. After Subhas staked his past, his present, his future and everything

even his life, in quest of the fulfilment of his mission Gandhi began to make a refreshing rediscovery of Subhas.

Earlier, Gandhi had rarely shown any political consideration for Subhas. He was not prepared to extend even a fraction of patronage to Subhas what he had always shown to Nehru. Gandhi maintained this attitude till January 1941. He had many doubts, many questions about the political motive of Subhas. Was he an inveterate believer in violence ? Did Subhas maintain a secret liaison with the 'terrorists' of Bengal and Punjab to encourage them to frustrate the non-violent mission of Gandhi ? Was his politics based on an overbearing spirit of adventurism ? Did Subhas maintain a sky-high ambition to soar above all other leaders of the Congress ? Was Subhas jealous about his liking for Nehru ? Many such questions, probably, kept the mind of Gandhi clouded about Subhas for years.

Further, by making Nehru the president of the Lahore Congress, Gandhi could win him over for good. But, even after he was elevated to the highest office of the Congress in its Haripura session, Subhas remained to behave as independently as before. Gandhi succeeded to win over the confidence of the Congress socialist leaders, although they were adherents, then, of the Marxian doctrines, quite in contradiction with the Gandhian philosophy. But, Subhas never gave up his independent outlook and continued to organize a left wing of Congressmen inside the Congress. For Gandhi, Subhas appeared to behave too independently, too defiantly to take him as one of his close confidants.

Gandhi's doubts and misgivings about Subhas were so deep-seated that he even refused to give a letter of introduction to Subhas when he went to Europe in the early thirties. He twice stalled Subhas from becoming the president of the Congress and stubbornly resisted his second nomination for this office. Before and after the Tripuri Congress, Gandhi was known to maintain an unsparing attitude of opposition to the politics of Subhas.

But, by his daring dash to throw himself into the burning cauldron of the world war, Subhas achieved a miracle. He succeeded in converting Gandhi to his side for the success of

his mission. Subhas, from now on, appeared in a different image before Gandhi. Gandhi forgot everything of the past conflicts—the idealism of Subhas, his total abandon for the cause of India's freedom captivated the mind and heart of the Mahatma. All his political decisions were very largely influenced, thereafter, by his vision of Subhas flashing before his mind's eye.

In 1942, the war situation rapidly changed, seriously endangering the future of the British empire. It, no doubt, changed the perspective of Gandhi, but his attitude to the war situation was significantly changed by his modified views about Subhas. It has been unmistakably recorded by Louis Fisher, Maulana Azad and quite a few others how Gandhi's new attitude towards Subhas played a major factor in the rejection of the offer of the Cripps Mission and giving the historical call, in 1942, to the Britishers to quit India.

SUBHAS'S BROADCAST

For over a year, Subhas kept his identity and whereabouts carefully undisclosed. While silently organizing the Azad Hind Legion in Germany, he kept track with the political developments inside India. In his note, as he recorded in Berlin, he wrote : "During 1941, the Civil Disobedience Movement (Individual) continued but without enthusiasm on the part of Gandhi and his followers. The Mahatma had calculated that, following a mild policy, he would ultimately open the door towards a compromise but in this he was disappointed. His goodness was mistaken for weakness and the British Government went on exploiting India for war purposes . . . When towards the end of 1941 war clouds appeared in the Far Eastern horizon, the British set free the Congress leaders . . . (except those belonging to the left wings) . . . The desire of the Government for a compromise was reciprocated . . . The Congress Working Committee, meeting at Wardha on January 16, 1942, passed a resolution offering co-operation in the war effort again." [*The Indian Struggle—1935-42*].

However, the mood of Mahatma Gandhi changed radically after two significant events namely, the fall of Singapore on February 15, 1942, and self-revelation of Subhas over a

broadcast by Azad Hind Radio. In his first address to his countrymen the Indian leader said in February 1942:

"This is Subhas Chandra Bose* speaking to you over Azad Hind Radio. For about a year, I have waited in silence and patience for the march of events, now the hour has struck and I come forward to speak. The fall of Singapore means the collapse of the British Empire . . . and the dawn of a new era in Indian history."

This broadcast by Subhas created a thrill in the minds of the Indian people. They were happily assured to know that their beloved leader was alive and working for the liberation of their country.

After the fall of Singapore, Malaya and Burma, things began to move very fast in Indian politics. Chiang Kai-shek and his wife visited India in February 1942 to persuade Gandhi and the Congress leaders to co-operate with the British war effort to fight against the Japanese. But they failed to convince Gandhi. Gandhi was in no mood to think in terms of co-operation with the British. On his return from India, Chiang Kai-shek informed the US President, Mr Franklin D. Roosevelt, that " . . . if the British Government does not fundamentally change its policy towards India, it would be like presenting India to the enemy." Roosevelt in his anxiety over the Indian situation requested the British Premier, Mr Winston Churchill, for an "immediate action." But Mr

*This live broadcast of Subhas recorded by the author with the help of a party stenographer. The author was then interned under the Defence of India Act in Dacca Hall, a hostel of Dacca University. As a research scholar of the university, he was permitted to do research work in a university laboratory, a furlong away from the hostel. Prof. Satyendra Nath Bose, the scientist of the eminence of Bose-Einstein Theory, had a very powerful radio set in his laboratory. The author utilized it secretly and without the knowledge of Prof. Bose to record the speech of Subhas Chandra Bose. It was promptly printed and distributed all over the big cities in India with the help of his Forward Bloc co-workers. It appeared on the walls of the streets of Dacca a week later. This Indian publicity of the first speech of Subhas caused a sensation but the annoyed government could not trace its source. The whole matter was disclosed by the author even to Prof. Bose, only after 1947.

Churchill, the diehard imperialist, told Mr Roosevelt that "100 million Muslims, . . . the Indian Army, . . . 40 million untouchables and the princely states with 80 million people were with the British" and hence he could not "concede the Congress demand for immediate independence." On March 10, 1942, in a long cable to Churchill, the US President again asked the British Government to concede "dominion government" to Indians to avoid a "chaotic revolution." The British Government ultimately agreed, mainly under the pressure of their principal ally, to send the Cripps Mission to India in April 1942.

Soon after the announcement of the Cripps Mission's visit to India, Subhas switched on to strident criticism of the mission. The Government also, rather inadvertently, helped Subhas to make him heard more attentively by his countrymen.

During the third week of March 1942, Reuter flashed a news from London reporting that "Subhas Chandra Bose died in an air-crash while flying to Tokyo." The Indian people were terribly upset by this report. Every daily published the news under all-column banner headlines. Mahatma Gandhi missed no time to send a telegram to the old mother of Subhas Bose expressing his deep grief over the reported tragic incident. In a press statement, he paid a glowing tribute to Subhas.

But, to the great joy of the Indian people, the report of Subhas Bose's death proved to be incorrect. What really happened was the death of four Indian revolutionaries who were flying from Bangkok to Tokyo. Subhas immediately made a broadcast to inform his countrymen: "This is Subhas Chandra Bose, who is still alive, speaking to you over Azad Hind Radio . . . I can imagine that the British Government, at this critical hour, would like to see me dead since they are now trying their level best to win India over to their side for the purpose of imperialist war." He paid, in his address, eloquent tributes to the revolutionaries who lost their lives in the air-crash.

The Indian people felt overjoyed to know that their beloved leader was not only very much alive but he was, indeed,

working for the liberation of their motherland. The Mahatma also expressed his great relief in another telegram sent to the mother of Subhas.

The reaction of the Indian people over these two reports about Subhas extremely annoyed the British Government. They found to their utter disappointment how deeply the Indian people still loved and adored Subhas. The British Government felt more disturbed, because quite contrary to their expectation, Subhas became the principal focus of public attention in India at a very sensitive time when Cripps was conducting crucial negotiations with Congress leaders on the question of a political settlement.

Cripps could not desist from communicating his annoying surprise to Maulana Azad, the then Congress president, about the expressions of exalted admiration of Subhas by 'Mr Gandhi'. According to Azad's account, as recorded in his book '*India Wins Freedom*':

> "There was a news flash that Subhas Bose had died in an air-crash. This created a sensation in India and Gandhiji, among others, was deeply moved. He sent a message of condolence to Bose's mother, in which he spoke in glowing terms about her son and his services to India. Later on, it turned out that the report was false. Cripps, however, complained to me that he had not expected a man like Gandhiji to speak in such glowing terms about Subhas Bose, who had openly sided with the Axis Powers."

The British minister was yet to learn how the image of Subhas was then dominating the mind of the Mahatma, and how he resolved not to do anything that was likely to go against Subhas.

CRIPPS' OFFER REJECTED

While Cripps was engaged in a dialogue in Delhi with the Indian leaders of different interests, Subhas went on relentlessly rapping the Cripps' offer over Azad Hind Radio from Berlin. He ceaselessly attacked the offer to expose its hollowness and highlight the imperialist design behind it to divide India.

In an open radio-letter to Cripps, Subhas said: "British politicians and propaganda machine have been continuously reminding us since 1933 that the Axis Powers are a menace to India and now we are being told that India is in danger of an attack by the enemy. But is this not sheer hypocrisy ? India has no enemies outside her frontiers . . . Her one enemy is British imperialism and the only adversary that India has got to rid of is the perpetual aggression of British imperialism. It was the British Government that declared India to be a belligerent power against the will of the Indian people . . . for exploiting the resources of India for Britain's war purposes . . . I am convinced that if India does not participate in Britain's war, there is not the least possibility of India being attacked by any of the Axis Powers."

All the broadcasts made by Subhas had very powerful effect on the Mahatma. Nehru, Azad, Rajagopalachari and many other Congress leaders were in favour of accepting the Cripps offer. A kind of a very delicate moral pressure was also brought upon Gandhiji by Sri Aurobindo. Doorai Swami, his close associate, carried the letter from the Pondicherry Ashram to Gandhi, in which he urged for the acceptance of Cripps' offer. In his characteristic style, the Mahatma told Doorai Swami after reading the letter: "This means, I shall have to fight Subhas !" Gandhi was now a different man. He was not prepared any more to fight Subhas, by extending co-operation to the British war efforts. He, therefore, did not hesitate to decline to accept the advice of a great personality like Sri Aurobindo ! The mind of the Mahatma had already been fixed up. He described the Cripps' offer as a "post-dated cheque on a crashing bank." Only Gandhi could make such an explosive characterization of Cripps' offer and then reject it as a useless offer fit to be thrown into a waste paper basket.

Why Gandhi rejected the offer ? It appeared that he accepted the analysis of Subhas that if India did not willingly get involved in the war effort of the British Government, there was no fear of India being attacked by Japan. Secondly, he also believed like Subhas that the British empire was on the verge of a 'crash'. And, most significantly, it appeared that the

Mahatma did not want "to fight Subhas" any more. Corroborating these conclusions, indirectly though, Azad later wrote :

> "Gandhiji did not expresss his opinion about the outcome of war in clear terms, but in discussions with him I felt that he was becoming more and more doubtful about an Allied victory. I also saw that Subhas Bose's escape to Germany had made great impression on Gandhiji. He had not formerly approved many of Bose's actions, but now I found a change in his outlook. Many of his remarks convinced me that he admired the courage and resourcefulness that Subhas Bose had displayed in making his escape from India. His admiration for Subhas Bose unconsciously coloured his views about the war situation. This admiration was also one of the factors which clouded discussions during the Cripps' Mission in India." (*India Wins Freedom*).

Louis Fischer in his book, '*A Week With Gandhi*', published in 1942, also wrote about this strange influence of Subhas on the Mahatma. "In the early part of 1942", he recorded in his book, "I spent a week with Gandhiji in his Ashram. I was surprised to note that not only Gandhi but everybody in the Ashram was also influenced by Subhas Bose."

APOLOGIST

After Subhas disclosed his identity and his whereabouts, the BBC and the Communists in India started a tirade against him, maligning him as an 'Axis agent' and a 'quisling'. Their propaganda was directed to vitiate the public opinion in india and particularly of the mind of Mahatma Gandhi against the Indian revolutionary. To counter this slandering campaign, Subhas told his countrymen: "Britain's paid propagandists have been calling me an enemy agent. . . I am not an apologist of the Tripartite Powers . . . that is not my job. . . . .It is not my task to defend what they have done or may do in future. . . .My concern is India. When British imperialism is defeated, India will get her freedom. . . .India is presented with the choice between freedom and slavery and she must

make her choice in favour of freedom. For Indians of today, it is a chance of a life-time and for India it is an opportunity rare in human history. . ."

Subhas said further, "I need no credentials, when I speak to my own people. My whole life is a long, persistent, uncompromising struggle against British imperialism, and this is the best guarantee of my bonafides. All my life I have been the servant of India. . .and till the last hours of my life I shall remain so. . . .My allegiance and loyalty have ever been and will ever be to India and to India alone,. . .no matter in which part of the world I may live."

In another broadcast, Subhas reminded his countrymen: ". . .India has but one enemy, the enemy which has robbed her of her freedom, the enemy which has been exploiting her for years, and that enemy is British imperialism. It is a tragedy that some of our countrymen have been duped by the British propaganda that they have forgotten the real enemy. India's one and the only enemy is British imperialism which keeps India enslaved even now."

NEW MOVE BY MAHATMA

In 1940, Gandhi refused to accept Subhas's pleading for starting an 'immediate national struggle' to avail of the war opportunity. Gandhi offered four vital reasons in justification of his stand. First, he considered it as a 'sin' to try to win independence over the 'ruins of Britain'. Second, he found the "atmosphere of India full of hatred and violence." Third, he felt that the "Muslim League blocked the Congress." And, fourth, he expected "compromise and negotiation with the British Government" on the issue of "transfer of power."

During the early part of 1942, all the four constraints, standing in the way of starting a national struggle, aggravated further. Regarding the hope for a peaceful negotiation with the British Government, it brightened after the visit of the Cripps' Mission to India. It was a big opportunity for the Congress to avoid confrontation with the British Government and join hands with them and get into the Viceroy's Council.

Again, it was the time when Britain and its allies were facing the worst situation in all sectors of war. Britain was

being battered every day by hundreds of Nazi bombers. Rommel's army was seen heading towards the heart of Egypt and in the eastern front, German tanks, were reported ravaging the Caucasian region of Russia. In Asia, Japan conquered all the American, British, French and Dutch colonies and its army reached the eastern frontier of India. Britain, it appeared, was almost on the verge of 'ruins'.

On the other hand, the political climate in India was getting more susceptible to violence as the communal cries of the Muslim League and the virulent diatribes of Jinnah against the Congress and Mahatma Gandhi, particularly, vitiated the whole political atmosphere.

In such a critical situation, when Britain was under pressure of the US and China for coming to a political settlement with India, and further, when Nehru, Azad, Rajagopalachari and most other Congress leaders were in favour of accepting the offer, why Gandhi, standing almost alone, took a most unpredictable decision to reject the offer ? Its answer could be found in analysing the amazingly new report between Gandhi and Subhas—the Mahatma in India and Netaji far away in Berlin.

A DIFFERENT GANDHI

The stiff attitude of Gandhi in dealing with the offer of the Cripps' Mission and the consequential failure of the talks with the British minister shocked Nehru, Azad, Rajagopalachari and many other members of the Congress Working Committee. Nehru was deeply committed to anti-Axis and pro-Allies policies. He and Rajagopalachari, particularly, fervently desired a settlement with the British. Their frustration turned into a sense of alarm when they noticed through Gandhi's writings in the *Harijan* that the mind of the Mahatma was hardening against the government. In an article in the *Harijan* on April 19, 1942, he wrote that the safety and interest of both Britain and India "lie in orderly and timely British withdrawal from India."

On the other side, Subhas was too happy to learn that the negotiations with the Cripps' Mission had failed. In his address to the Mahatma and the Indian people, Subhas said:

"I must congratulate you most warmly on your sense of national honour and self-respect in rejecting the impudent offer of Sir Stafford Cripps. By doing so, you have not only brought India nearer to the goal of liberty, but you have, at the same time, raised yourself in the estimation of the whole world. . . .Thanks to Mahatma Gandhi. . . .the danger of India's participation in Britain's war. . . .has been averted once for all."

Forgetting all about the past, in his deep appreciation of Gandhi's stand, Subhas said further: "Once again, Mahatma Gandhi has risen to the occasion."

The stand of the Mahatma raised a great hope and admiration in the mind of Subhas—on the contrary, it terribly annoyed Nehru, Azad and 'Rajaji'. An emergency meeting of the Congress Working Committee was called on April 27, 1942, at Allahabad to reassess the policy of the party after the rejection of the Cripps' offer. Gandhi did not attend it but sent a draft resolution through Mirabehn for its consideration. The draft projected the following major points: "(i) The British Government should withdraw from India; (ii) India is a zone of war as a result of British imperialism holding the country ; (iii) India has no quarrel with any country; (iv) if Japan invaded India, it shall meet the aggression with non-violence; and (v) the presence of foreign soldiers in India is a menace to Indian freedom." The draft also laid down the form of non-cooperation with the British Government. In its vital part, the draft recorded the views of Gandhi in which he wrote: Britain is incapable of defending India. Japan's quarrel is not with India. She is warring against the British empire. If India were freed, her first step would probably be to negotiate with Japan."

The draft of Gandhi very substantially—and in some part even verbatimly—reflected the views of Subhas as he gave out in his broadcasts over Azad Hind Radio.

When Gandhi's draft was placed before the working committee, it acted like a bomb-shell. Nehru, Azad, Rajaji and others, sharing their views together, could hardly believe that Gandhi would go to the extreme point of undoing all the earlier resolutions adopted by the Congress. A heated debate

followed over Gandhi's draft (a verbatim record of which was seized by the British police and given to the press). Nehru and Rajaji vehemently opposed it.

Nehru said, "The whole background of the draft is one which will inevitably make the world think that we are passively lining up with the Axis Powers. The British are asked to withdraw. After the withdrawal we are to negotiate with Japan. . . .Our policy of sympathy with one group is completely changed. It is Gandhiji's feeling that Japan and Germany will win. This feeling unconsciously governs his decision. The approach in the draft is completely different from mine. . .The approach is a variation from the attitude we have taken up about the Allies. At least I have committed myself to that sympathy 100 per cent."

Rajaji remarked rather caustically: ". . . . .do not run into the arms of Japan, which is what the resolution comes to."

Staunch Gandhiites like Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Kripalani, Sitaramayya and others supported the draft resolution of Gandhi but Nehru, Rajaji and others opposed it vehemently. Ultimately, an alternative draft prepared by Nehru was adopted which however, included, the vital operative part of Gandhi's draft.

Gandhi felt much disturbed over the report of the Allahabad controversy, but his determination to prepare the country for a national struggle hardened further.

When the Gandhi-Nehru conflict over the Congress policy regarding starting a national struggle was going on, Gandhi quite often talked of Subhas in his inner circles. Kiran Shankar Roy, representative of the Bengal ad hoc Congress committee, told his friends that Gandhi once said, '*If Subhas was today in India, I would have required nobody's help*'. [Kiran Shankar Roy was then opposed to Subhas's politics.]

CHANGE IN GANDHI

After Cripps left India, the fighting mood of Gandhi was getting sharper every week. He was giving out his mind through his writings in the *Harijan*. According to Azad's record, Gandhiji's mind was now moving from the extreme of complete

inactivity to that of organized mass effort." Gandhi wrote on June 7, 1942: "I waited and waited until the country should develop the non-violent strength necessary to throw off the foreign yoke. But my attitude has now undergone a change. I feel I cannot afford to wait. If I continue to wait, I might have to wait till the Doomsday."

In his propaganda drive over Azad Hind Radio, Subhas also began to move faster. Earlier, only half an hour was devoted by the radio for Indian propaganda. But, now it was intensified in his effort to strengthen the Gandhian move for immediate national struggle.

Gandhi did not clearly disclose his planning for the mass movement till the meeting of the Working Committee at Wardha on July 6, 1942. Azad, the then president of the Congress, recalled: "Gandhiji spoke to me for the first time (on July 5) about the 'Quit India Movement'. I could not easily adjust my mind to the new idea. I felt that we are facing an extraordinary dilemma. Our sympathies were with the Allied powers, but the British Government had taken up an attitude which made it impossible for us to co-operate with them. . . .I felt that we must refrain from any word or action which could offer encouragement to the Japanese. . . . .Gandhiji did not agree. He insisted that the British must leave India."

Gandhi's political thinking was now almost identical only with Subhas. Nehru and Azad went on to persistently oppose Gandhi's reading of the war situation and his move to start a national struggle without any further delay. Gandhi's stand, which underwent a metamorphic change, remained uncompromisingly firm. The Congress Working Committee had an unusually prolonged sittings, in which Nehru and Azad argued at length opposing Gandhi's line of mass action. However, Gandhi refused to budge an inch from his decision. He threatened that he would go alone to give a call to the Indian people to start the 'Quit India Movement' if the working committee disagreed with his views.

Louis Fischer, who was in Wardha for that whole week, gave a graphic picture of the conflict between Gandhi and Nehru, in '*A Week With Gandhi*'. Azad wholly sided with Nehru. Gandhi almost decided to part company with both

Azad and Nehru. As Azad put it in his book:

"Our discussion started on July 5 and continued for several days. I had on earlier occasions also differed from Gandhiji on some points but never before had our *difference been so complete. Things reached a climax when he (Gandhi) sent me a letter to the effect that my stand was so different from his that we could not work together. If the Congress wanted Gandhiji to lead the movement, I must resign from the presidentship and also withdraw from the working committee. Jawaharlal must do the same.*"

Rajaji had already resigned from the Congress for his unbridgeable difference with Gandhi on the issue of the 'Quit India Movement.'

Finally, after marathon debates lasting nine days, often marked by the expressions of sharply conflicting views, Nehru and Azad surrendered to accept Gandhi's decision to start the mass struggle to compel the British to withdraw from India. However, Gandhi agreed to add Nehru's airy thesis on reference of India's case 'to the peoples of United Nations'.

Subhas, commenting on the Wardha resolution, wrote: "There is no doubt that the Congress resolution came nearest in expressing the wish of the vast majority of the Indian people. It also brought the Congress fundamentally near to the stand always taken by the writer (Bose), namely that the destruction of the British power in India was the *sine qua non* for the solution of India's all problems, and that the Indian people would have to fight for the achievement of this goal" (*Indian Struggle II*).

VISION OF SUBHAS

Louis Fischer felt much intrigued by the strange pro-Subhas feeling found prevailing in the Gandhi Ashram. In his effort to fathom the mind of Gandhi, he made a few provocatively disparaging remarks about 'Subhas Bose' for his seeking aid from the Axis Powers. Promptly scotching the adverse comments of the American journalist, the Mahatma said that he considered "*Subhas Bose. . .a patriot of patriots.*" Replying to a few more dragging questions of Fischer, Gandhi said: "He may be misguided. I think he is misguided. I

have often opposed him. Twice I kept him from becoming the president of the Congress. Finally, he did become the president, although my views differed from his. But suppose he had gone to Russia or America to ask for aid to India. Would that have made it better ?"

"Yes, of course," Fischer said, "It does make a difference to whom you go."

"I do not want help from anybody to make India free," Gandhi replied, "I want India to save herself."

"Throughout history", Fischer recalled, "nationalists and individuals have helped foreign countries. Lafayette went from France to assist America in winning independence from Britain. Thousands of Americans and other foreigners died in Spain to save the Spanish Republic."

"Individuals, yes", Gandhi said, "But America is the ally of England which enslaved us. And I am not certain that democracies will make a better world, when they defeat the fascists. They may become very much like the fascists themselves."

Fischer got a stunning reply from Gandhi, when he asked the Mahatma why he was so impatient to start the Quit India Movement. This he asked after he felt dismayed over the adoption of the Quit India resolution by the Congress Working Committee.

The Mahatma replied very cryptically but its implication was stunning, almost explosive, for the American journalist. He parried Fischer, saying: "*Go and ask Subhas* !" Gandhi, thus, unmistakably revealed a mind that was then working in the same wave-length as that of Subhas.

OPEN REBELLION

Soon after his decision to go in for the national struggle, the whole demeanour of the Mahatma galvanically changed. He was found to make astounding departure in his words and action from his past legacy of non-violent satyagraha. He no longer talked of 'satyagraha', 'non-violence' or 'peaceful means.' Instead, he spoke in terms of sparking shots like 'rebellion', 'revolt', 'anarchy' and 'conflagration'. He did not ask the people to follow any more the orthodox programme

of non-cooperation and civil disobedience. His voice did not reflect his classical language of Ashram. He asked the people to think in terms of an 'open rebellion' and 'an unarmed revolt against the British rule.' He told his countrymen: "It will be my biggest movement. . . .the last struggle of my life."

Gandhi had no misconception about the nature of the struggle to break out once he sounded the bugle for it. He said: "I have no false notion of prestige; no personal consideration would make me take a step that I know was sure to plunge the country into a conflagration." The Mahatma compared the British rule in India with an "ordered disciplined anarchy" and in his new mood urged the Indian people to end it. He commanded them: "This ordered disciplined anarchy should go, and if there is complete lawlessness in India as a result, I would risk it." The spectre of Chauri Chaura did not haunt him any longer. He told very clearly, "I don't want rioting as a direct result. If in spite of all precautions rioting does take place, it cannot be helped."

Gandhi contemplated his movement to take the shape of an open rebellion and not like a 'satyagraha' or 'passive resistance' of the past. A people's upsurge was bound to be sweeping and shortlived and in such a struggle, there was no room for offering satyagraha. Gandhi, therefore, informed his countrymen in advance, "I am not going to court imprisonment. It is too soft a thing. . .My intention was to make the thing short and swift as possible." Unlike the movement of 1921 or 1930 this time Gandhi did not visualise any negotiation with the British Government. He categorically said: "There is no room left in the proposal (for struggle) for withdrawal or negotiation. There is no question of any more chance. After all it is an open rebellion."

And what about the Gandhian ethics of non-violence ? This time, very strangely, the Messiah of Ahimsa, did not want to make any fetish of it. About the character of his movement, the Mahatma said: "It will be a mass movement of strictly non-violent character. . . . I waited and waited until the country should develop the non-violent strength necessary to throw off the foreign yoke. But my attitude has

now undergone a change. I feel I cannot afford to wait. . . The people have not my *Ahimsa*, but mine should help them. I am sure there is ordered anarchy around and about us. I am sure that the anarchy may result because of British withdrawal or their refusal to hear us and our decision to defy their authority will in no way be worse than the present anarchy. After all those who are unarmed cannot produce a frightful amount of violence or anarchy, and I have faith that out of that anarchy may arise pure non-violence." He, therefore, asked the British : "*Leave India to God. If that is too much, then leave her to anarchy.*" Gandhi knew, "that anarchy may lead to internecine warfare for a time or to unrestrained decoities" but still he believed, "for the preparation that I have prayed and worked for may never come, and in the meantime I may be enveloped and overwhelmed by the flames that threaten all of us. This is why I have decided that even at certain risks which are obviously involved, I must ask the people to resist the slavery."

The Mahatma, therefore, did not raise any political slogans of the old *satyagraha* movement, but raised a battle-cry befiting a revolution. When he concluded his 90-minute possionate speech in the historic AICC section at Bombay on August 7, 1942, he said in the voice of strident revolutionary : "*Every one of you should, from this movement onwards, consider yourself a free man or woman and act as if you are free and are no longer under the heels of this imperialism . . . . You may take it from me that I am not going to strike a bargain with the Viceroy for ministries and the like.* I am not going to be statisfied with anything short of freedom. In this struggle, we shall do or die. We shall either free India or die in the attempt. . . . *Karenge ya marenge* !"

The battle-cry of the Mahatma was very much like the battle-cry of the future Netaji of the Azad Hind revolution. In his final order of the day, Netaji also commanded his Army in 1944 in the same voice as the Mahatma did in 1942. He told his Army of Liberation in 1944 : "We shall carve our way through the enemy's ranks, or, if God wills. we shall die a martyr's death. And in our last sleep we shall kiss the road which will bring our road to Delhi. The road to Delhi is the

road to freedom. On to Delhi !"

CLARION CALL

In his clarion call to the nation for an "irresistible mass upsurge" Gandhi said : "Even if the United Nations oppose me, even if the whole India tries to persuade me that I am wrong, I will go ahead. . . .and stand alone. . . .I have pledged the Congress and the Congress will do or die."

Gandhi sounded the bugle for the zero-hour, but, to the surprise of many, he did not detail any elaborate programme for the struggle to follow. Maulana Azad recorded in his memoirs: "When I pressed him (Gandhi) to tell us what exactly would be the programme of resistance, he had no clear idea. The only thing he mentioned. . . .that unlike previous occasions this time the people would not court imprisonment voluntarily. They should resist and submit to the Government only if physically forced to do so."

Azad, perhaps, failed to grasp the implication of the remarks of Gandhi when he said that the 'Quit India' struggle should be 'short and swift'. This time Gandhi did not envisage the struggle to follow the pattern of 1921 non-cooperation or 1930 civil disobedience movements. According to Gandhi the Quit India Movement "will include all that a mass movement can include. . . .The programme covers every activity included in a mass movement" and he "would not hesitate to go to the extreme limit." It "would not", as Gandhi said, "exclude a general strike." Contrary to all his earlier stands, Gandhi in his AICC speech, urged, "The sepoys should also declare that they belonged to the Congress and if they were asked to shoot Indians they should refuse to do so."

Mashrwallah, the editor of the *Harijan*, wrote in the weekly, soon after Gandhi's arrest that the Mahatma contemplated a *non-violent revolution* and another known Gandhiite, like Shankarrao Deo, called it a *mutiny resembling that of 1857.*

AZAD HIND RADIO

In the early morning of April 8, Gandhi and most other

Congress leaders, assembled at Bombay for the AICC meeting, were arrested by a single sweep. No direction, no instruction could be issued or any programme could be given to the people. The news of the arrest of the leaders led to spontaneous demonstrations in some cities. The government imposed a ban on news and censor on post. It resulted in the sudden blackout of all publicity about the movement and complete disruption of organisational links of the Congress. The people became nonplussed without knowing how to move and what to do. In such a critical moment of total void of publicity and disruption of the Congress organisation, the communication gaps were filled up by a Azad Hind Radio of Subhas. Two more secret radio centres, called 'National Congress Radio' and 'Azad Muslim Radio', were also set up by Subhas at Berlin. These three radio centres began to broadcast to the Indian people all about the course and action of the 'Quit India Movement' in all the major languages of India. The common people in India believed that two of these radio centres were being clandestinely run by Congressmen. These radio broadcasts not only gave publicity to the happenings inside India and made propaganda about the Quit India Movement, but also provided a detailed programme for the people to follow. Subhas outlined a 12-point programme for the August rebellion. In keeping with the spirit of the Gandhian movement, he characterized his programme as the "Non-violent guerilla warfare." In his broadcast to the Indian people, Subhas said: "Comrades ! in our national struggle that has now begun, all nationalists, whether in India or outside, must play their part . . . We who are the vanguards of the Indian National Army have a sacred mission of leading the national struggle to a successful conclusion."

He continued, "There is no cause to be depressed simply because the leaders are imprisoned. On the contrary, their sufferings will serve as a perpetual inspiration to the entire nation."

Emphasising the nature and the strategy of the struggle, Subhas said, "The campaign now going on in India may be described as the non-violent guerilla warfare. In this guerilla war, the tactics of dispersal have to be employed.

"The object of this non-violent guerilla campaign should be two-fold: First, to destroy war production in India, and, second, to paralyze the British administration in the country."

Subhas outlined a 12-point programme which included:

Boycott of British goods, including burning of British stalls and government stores ;

total boycott of all Britishers in India, and of those Indians who are pro-British ;

holding of public meetings and demonstrations in spite of official prohibition ;

publishing of secret bulletins and setting up of secret radio stations ;

marching to the houses of British officials and demanding their departure from India ;

organizing processions for entering and occupying government offices, secretariat buildings, law courts, etc., with a view to paralyzing administration ;

arranging to punish police officers and prison officials who appear and persecute the people ;

erecting barricades in the streets where there is a likelihood of attack from the police and the military ;

setting fire to government offices and factories which are working for war purposes ;

interrupting postal, telegraph and telephone communications as frequently as possible and in different places ;

interrupting railway, bus and train services, whenever there is a possibility of hampering the transport of solidiers of war materials ; and

destroying police stations, railway stations and jails in isolated places.

This action programme of Subhas gave positive directives to the 'Augusters'. The struggle picked up momentum by the third week of August and Congressmen working in the underground AICC office of the banned Congress picked up these instructions to issue a 12-point AICC action programme of their own, which was more or less developed on the instructions of Subhas Bose.

As the attacks of the British were concentrated on the demonstrations in big cities and towns, Subhas asked the

guerilla activists of the 'August rebellion' to follow the 'tactics of dispersal'. He asked them to "spread out activities all over the country so that the British police and military may not be able to concentrate their attack on the point." "In accordance with the principles of guerilla warfare," Subhas directed them, "we should also be as mobile as possible and should move continuously from place to place. The authorities should never be able to predict where our activities will emerge next."

The people responded splendidly to follow the 'non-violent guerilla warfare' action programme of Subhas. Although the British Government suppressed facts, yet they had to admit that the people "destroyed 250 railway stations, burnt and damaged 800 post offices, cut telephone and telegraph lines in 3,500 places and burnt 155 police stations and government buildings." The actual figures, however, were much higher.

The people in India everywhere followed Subhas's directives. They spread out into the rural areas and the communications and government offices became their main targets. Before Subhas left India, he had asked the people to prepare for setting up 'parallel governments' at the final stage of freedom struggle. The people attempted to set up such parallel governments in many places and in Midnapor district of Bengal, Ballia district of Uttar Pradesh and Satara district of Maharashtra they succeeded in such moves quite remarkably.

In another broadcast Subhas congratulated the "unarmed Indian people" for "spontaneously passing on from passive resistance to active fighting and . . . destroying railways, telegraph and telephone communications, setting fire to police stations, post offices and government buildings." Dr R.C. Majumdar wrote in his '*History of Indian Freedom*': "The chief targets of attack . . . of a widespread revolutionary upsurge of the people . . . were means of communications . . . and government establishments." This was exactly what Subhas asked the 'Augusters' to do.

SUBHAS DEFENDS GANDHI

After the people surged into revolutionary uprisings, Gandhi became the target of attacks by the British and the

Indian Communists. In the name of their anti-fascist people's war, the Indian Communists openly joined hands with the British Government to crush the August Revolution, and did not hesitate to resort to any treacherous means in doing so.

Countering these anti-national activities of the Indian Communists to denigrate Gandhi and denounce the national struggle, Subhas told his countrymen over Azad Hind Radio: "Do not be carried away by ideological considerations; do not bother about the internal politics of other countries which is no concern of ours." He also asked his countrymen to follow the Mahatma and face all "sufferings and massacres" as "this is the price of liberty and it has to be paid."

Paying eloquent tributes to Mahatma Gandhi, Subhas said: "British politicians, including the so-called socialists like Sir Stafford Cripps, may now condemn Gandhi. But did not the same Gandhi unconditionally help Britain in the last war (1914)? Did not the same Gandhi make an exceedingly pro-British declaration on September 6, 1939, immediately after the outbreak of war in Europe? Did not the same Gandhi postpone his ultimatum to the British government from September 1939 to August 1942? Was not the same Gandhi called by British MPs, like Miss Ellen Wilkinson, as the best policeman the British had in India? May I ask why has such a man, who is now 73 years old, demanded independence, here and now? . . . Present propaganda from London may have some influence in certain parts of Europe, but it can have no influence on the Indian people."

Replying to the criticism of the BBC for taking the help of the German radio for giving his all-out support to the Quit India movement launched by Gandhi, Subhas said again: "I do propaganda only for India and for the cause of Indian freedom. I challenge them to point out where I have done propaganda for anybody else . . . I am perfectly justified . . . to "accept the hospitality of the German radio for doing propaganda for Indian freedom. . . . During my 21 years of public life, the authorities in India and in England have not given me such an opportunity on even a single occasion. As a matter of fact, throughout his public career, even Mahatma Gandhi has never been invited to speak over the Indian radio."

JAYAPRAKASH LEADS

The leadership of giving directives to the August Revolution passed on to Jayaprakash Narayan after his heroic escape from Hazaribagh Jail. He followed the same strategy of 'guerilla warfare' as Subhas asked the Indians to follow in his broadcasts soon after the beginning of the August movement. In his three signed circular letters "to all fighters for freedom," Jayaprakash elaborated the plan of Subhas in greater details, keeping in view the developments in India.

After Subhas moved to South-East Asia and proclaimed the formation of the Provisional Government of Free India, the Indian Communists spared no words of worst calumny to denounce, decry and slander 'Subhas Bose'. Countering the Communist propaganda against Subhas, Jayaprakash wrote: "It is easy to denounce Subhas Chandra Bose as a quisling. Those who are themselves quislings of Britain find it easiest to denounce him. But nationalist India knows him as a fervent patriot and as one who has always been in the forefront of his country's fight for freedom. It is inconceivable that he should ever be ready to sell his country."

Jayaprakash not only defended Subhas, as he himself told the author, but also made all efforts to contact 'Subhas Babu'. He had sent two youngmen with his message to Subhas. The name of one was Abhoyankar and of the other he could not recollect. It was also decided that Biju Patnaik, then an officer in the British air force, who used to secretly ferry fugitive Jayaprakash from one place in India to the other, would make an airdash to Arakans from Chittagong. But before the plan could be executed, Biju was arrested. (Biju told all about it to author when both were detained together in Rohtak Jail during the Emergency.)

TWO POLES MEET

Till August 1942, Gandhi and Subhas were always viewed as two politically poles apart personalities. But the Quit India Movement is the biggest event in the history of the Indian freedom struggle when the two opposite poles met in unique unity regarding the technique and objective of the struggle for the country independence. In 1942, Gandhi used the words

'open rebellion', 'revolt' or 'anarchy' in deliberate consciousness to communicate to the Indian people his thinking about the character of his contemplated struggle. Gandhi never used any such expression in the course of any of his earlier movements, as he thought that such ideas were totally anachronistic to his concept of non-violent and peaceful passive resistance or satyagraha. These were the terms which were rather often used by Subhas.

August 8, 1942, was thus, the turning point in the history of the Indian freedom movement. The Quit India Movement was a complete departure from the traditional Gandhian satyagraha. Gandhi commanded it as an 'open rebellion' to the Indian people, and the people, making a response of an unprecedented upsurge, hailed it as 'August Revolution.' On this day, Gandhi sounded the bugle of the 'open rebellion' urging the people to 'do or die' and Subhas gave the programme of 'non-violent guerilla warfare' to the people to work out the order of the day of the supreme 'dictator' of rebellion. The Congress had, then, nominated Gandhi as its sole 'dictator' to lead the national struggle. August 8, 1942, is the remarkable day in the history of the struggle for Indian independence, when all the differences between Gandhi and Subhas regarding its technique and objectives ceased to divide them any more.

Subhas started a struggle in mid-1940 for the removal of the Hollwell Monument in Calcutta with the hope that it will set the process of the beginning of a national movement in spite of opposition from Gandhi. He was immediately arrested by the Government, when the Mahatma wrote a very interesting piece in the *Harijan*, stating: "The arrest of Subhas Babu is not a small matter. But he has laid out his plan of battle with deliberateness and boldness . . . I had told him if, at the end of his plan, there was Swaraj during my life-time, mine would be the first telegram of congratulation he would receive."

The Mahatma did not wait to see the end of the struggle of Subhas. After the 'rebel' staked everything for the success of his mission, he sent to Subhas a big message—million time more important than a 'telegram'. By launching the historic

'open rebellion' in August 1942, he made the greatest gift to Subhas—the authority and the sanction to speak and act for the freedom of the Indian people in the wider arena of the international world. It gave a tremendous boost to the revolutionary move of Subhas and empowered him with the right of the Indian people to deal with the Axis Powers with honour, dignity and effectiveness. Gandhi knocked down the moral basis of the Britishers to decry Subhas as any 'puppet' of the enemy of Britain. August Revolution immensely strengthened the position of Subhas to act in the international sphere as the leader of Indian national revolution.

Subhas keenly watched the course of August Rebellion, as he felt that, if it succeeded at home he would not require to make any further move abroad. Before launching the historic Imphal expedition of the war of Liberation of India, Subhas, now known as the Netaji of the Army of Indian Revolution, told his compatriots in India on July 12, 1944: "The only alternative plan of mine is that of Mahatma Gandhi embodied in the Quit India resolution. If that plan succeeds, our plan and our activities will be set at naught. On the other hand, if Mahatma Gandhi's plan failed, as it has failed then all hopes of Indian independence rests entirely on the fulfilment of our plan."

The Netaji always recognised that his Azad Hind revolution abroad was the continnum of the August Revolution of the Mahatma at home.

CHAPTER 5

On to Azad Hind Revolution

SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE jumped into the cauldron of World War II amidst unfathomable uncertainties. The only hope he had to fulfil his mission was the spirit of a 'revolutionary audacity' that was burning in him unextinguishably. Before he left India, he had no direct contact with Russia or the Axis Powers, nor had he any prior assurance of help from any of them. His was, indeed, a reckless adventurer—a kind of a pilgrim's wandering in search of the unknown. No revolutionary of the stature of Subhas Bose ever dared to fulfil such a perilous mission as he had set before himself for winning India's freedom.

Ignoring all probable hazards, Subhas looked forward with his characteristic optimism for future but with no expectation from behind. He had no illusion to expect any support for his move from Nehru. Nehru was wholly committed to the Allies, so was the mind of Maulana Azad and Rajagopalachari. And, broadly, the stand of the Congress as a whole was overtly against him when Subhas left India.

Moreover, Subhas did not expect any support or sympathy from Gandhi. He knew that Gandhi suspected him to be in secret league with revolutionary 'terrorists', harbouring a faith more in revolution than in non-violence. In 1931, Krishna Das, a secretary of the Mahatma, had sent a report to him alleging 'Subhas Bose's secret connection with the 'terrorists'. This letter was intercepted by the British police to use it as a vital justification for his continued exile and detention. For his misgivings about him, Gandhi did not hesitate even to refuse a letter of introduction to Subhas when he visited Europe. Further, how after what happened since the Tripuri Congress, and the conflict and confrontation that followed for the last 18 months, could Subhas expect any soft attitude from

Gandhi ? The last letter that Subhas received from Gandhi, only seven days before he left India, made it unmistakably clear how the mind of Gandhi was working. He knew his escape from India would be viewed by Gandhi as complete disavowal of non-violence on his part and a kind of declaration for his final option for violent revolutionary means. How could, then, Subhas hope to secure any support from the apostle of peace and non-violence for his move for a violent revolution ?

Subhas did not entertain any hope of getting any support from Gandhi or the Congress for his revolutionary move. Rather, he feared that he might be openly denounced by Gandhi and Nehru and the Congress as a whole. He took into consideration all such probabilities but was so deeply impelled from within to move for fulfilling the mission of liberation of his motherland that he was prepared to face any peril, any danger, any hurdle in his way ahead. He had pledged, before he resorted to a fast unto death in the Presidency Jail, either to make every effort to seize the war opportunity for securing India's liberation or perish.

Subhas was so possessed with the dream of a mission that he did not even bother to ponder over the consequences of any possibility of his being arrested while travelling alone in train about 2,000 miles from Calcutta to Peshawar. If Subhas did face such a fate, he would have been ridiculed to be killed politically. But no such apprehension or nothing of the kind deterred him in any way from his pledge.

RUSSO-GERMAN PACT

Subhas took such a daring decision of escaping from India after he got the authentic information from his secret contacts that the Russo-German Pact of 1939 was accepted as an abiding fact for the future by both Russia and Germany. He also came to know that Russia, Germany, Italy and Japan entered into a secret agreement to divide Europe, Asia and Africa into four 'spheres of influence' among themselves after the fall of Britain which they expected by the end of the spring of 1941. Britain was then fighting a lonely war after France crumbled totally. According to such a scheme of dividing the areas of

Anglo-French and Dutch empires among the four Powers, India was earmarked for the Russian sphere of influence.

Subhas moved out of India with the hope to reach Moscow and not Berlin but could not establish any advance contact with Russia. He had earlier sent a secret letter to Moscow, when the Russo-German Pact was operative, which was carried to London by his nephew, Amiya Bose, for handing it over to the British Communist Party for its onward delivery to the Russian Communist Party. In it, Subhas sought Russian help for the cause of the struggle for India's freedom. He, however, had no knowledge whether this letter reached Moscow at all, and if it reached there, what was the response of Stalin. But still, the indomitable optimist in him made him go out of his country with the hope to reach Moscow.

When Subhas reached Kabul, he faced his first disappointment—a very serious hurdle—when Moscow refused to give him political shelter. He then managed, passing many risky days in Kabul, to contact the Italian embassy there and with its help to reach Berlin via Moscow. At Moscow, the German ambassador for Russia, a very important man of Hitler's hierarchy, met Subhas and confirmed the report of the 'Four-Power Agreement', which he had received while he was in India. He hoped that from Berlin he would succeed in contacting Russia.

BIG BLOW FROM HITLER

In Berlin, Subhas faced an unexpected treatment initially from the German Government. Though he was given shelter in Berlin, yet he was suspected to be a pro-Moscow man and an 'arrogant' Indian nationalist. For months the German police kept him under constant watch and he had little freedom to act effectively for his mission. But after some time, by dint of his dignity, determination and personality, he succeeded in surmounting most of the initial difficulties and in securing the respect and confidence of the highest circles of the German leadership. He set up a revolutionary organization, named the Azad Hind Centre, and raised the Azad Hind Legion, i.e., an army for India's liberation from among the Indian prisoners of war. He was given full freedom to run a

radio centre, calling it Azad Hind Radio, for the propagation of the cause of India's freedom. In a very short time, he could inspire most of the Indians living in Germany and other parts of Europe under the occupation of the Axis Powers to mobilize them under the banner of the Azad Hind Centre. He had indeed built up such a revolutionary organization, verily, out of nothing and only within a few months.

However, the whole plan of Subhas—the edifice of all his hopes—was completely shattered when Hitler committed the treachery to disown the Russo-German Pact of 1939 and attacked Russia in June 1941. Subhas had sensed this design of Hitler some time earlier and forgetting that he was sitting in the frightful den of the German Fuhrer, he sent a diplomatic note to the German Government to forewarn it : "For the success of the task of exterminating the British power and influence from the countries of the Near and Middle East, it is desirable that the *status quo* between Germany and Russia should be maintained."

The voice of caution of Subhas, however, appeared to fall on a deaf ear. After the German Army marched into Russia, Subhas was so upset that, ignoring the terrible risk it involved, he wrote to Joachin von Ribbentrop, the Foreign Minister of Hitler on July 5, 1941, through the Secretary of State of Nazi Germany, Dr Woermann, stating that the Indian people will view the German move as an 'imperialist' aggression against Russia. He wrote : "The prospect of realization of my plan looked gloomy in the altered circumstances. . . The public opinion in my country to the new situation in the East is unfavourable to your Government." Receiving this letter from Bose, Dr Woermann arranged a meeting with Bose to explain the German position to him. In this meeting, Bose told the German Secretary of State more categorically: "In the German-Russian war, the Indian people were very clearly with Russia, because the Indian people felt definitely that Germany was the aggressor and was for India, therefore, another dangerous imperialist power." One will think it is unbelivable how Subhas could make the exposition of his view so boldly and so bluntly to the highest officer of Fuhrer's administration !

Many big personalities of the highest political and military circles of Germany had developed great respect for the Indian leader. One of them was Admiral Canaris, the wartime chief of the Abwerh, the counter-intelligence organisation of Nazi Germany. How the mind of Subhas was then working became evident from a terribly frank, yet prophetic remark he made to Admiral. Canaris in autumn 1942. He told the German Admiral, that too about counter-intelligence : "You know as well as I do that Germany cannot win the war. But this time victorious Britain will lose India." It was a stunning remark, but only a man like Subhas Bose could dare tell it.

Subhas had no illusion about doing anything positive from Germany any more. Nevertheless, the indefatigable optimist continued to strengthen the Azad Hind Centre and the Azad Hind Legion, making it very clear to the Nazi Government that none of the centres or the legions would take part in any action at the Eastern Front against Russia.

GREATEST GIFT FROM GANDHI

Subhas remained silent and incognito under an assumed Italian name, *Signor Orlands Mazzola*, for the outside world for about a year. He disclosed his identity and the fact about his presence in Germany only when the Cripps Mission was sent to India by the British Government in April 1942. His respect for Gandhi increased manifold when the Mahatma rejected the Cripps' offer. It was a big surprise for him that Gandhi, who had shown all the inclinations earlier to arrive at a peaceful, negotiated settlement with the British Government, could outright reject the Cripps' offer of a dominion status after the war and immediate near-Indianization of the Viceroy's Council. He was further surprised that instead of denouncing his role for joining hands with the Axis Powers, he still called him "a patriot of the patriots." Gandhi did not say anything politically derogatory to Subhas after he left India.

When he left his country, Subhas had decided not to make any criticism of the Congress or his Congress colleagues. He did not rake up anything of the past polemics or conflicts in any of his broadcasts from Berlin. Although it was then known that Nehru, Azad, Rajaji and many others opposed

Gandhi for his stand against the Cripps Mission and his changed outlook about the war, Subhas made no adverse comment against any one of them. Subhas was now in a new mood to lend all-out support to Gandhi through his broadcasts from Berlin.

The August Rebellion was the most unexpected and the greatest gift of Gandhi to Subhas. The Quit India Movement was an unmistakably big support for the stand taken by Subhas, indirectly though, and it immensely fortified his position in the international sphere as the spokesman of the India's freedom struggle. After the August Rebellion, Gandhi's respect for Subhas, indeed, leaped sky-high. Now a new atmosphere of political rapport between Gandhi and Subhas had been created. Subhas never received any particular political favour or sympathy from Gandhi. But, now, that void was filled up by the patronage Subhas received from Gandhi in the gift of the August Rebellion, and it was beyond all his expectations from the Mahatma. Gandhi and Subhas now came nearer to each other which had happened never before. In fact, it appeared that the first battle of the Azad Hind war, that Subhas was to start later, was started by Gandhi himself in India in 1942.

RECKLESS RIDE

After the August Rebellion, Subhas became impatient to leave Germany for South-East Asia. Firstly, because his plan in Europe was completely frustrated by Hitler's aggression of Russia; secondly, the occupation of South-East Asia by Japan and the presence of the Japanese Army along the eastern frontier of India offered a golden opportunity for a revolutionary expedition into India for driving out the British from the Indian soil and, thirdly, the August Rebellion cleared all political confusion and wholly changed the internal situation in India to completely polarize the patriotic minds of the Indian people against the British. All these three vital factors made Subhas restless to make a dash to South-East Asia by any means.

Subhas knew it well that, in those war days, all the air

and the sea routes, barring a limited orbit around West Europe, were under the absolute domination of the air-force and the navy of the Anglo-Americans. In such circumstances, it appeared as something impossible for him to hope to reach South-East Asia from Germany. But the Indian revolutionary was determined to take any risk to try even this impossible task. He knew that nobody other than Hitler could consent to work out such a fantastic proposal. Subhas for the first time met Hitler in late 1942. The German Fuhrer was impressed to agree with this death-defying plan of the Netaji of the Indian revolution to move out of Germany to reach South-East Asia.

The scheduled, desperate air-dash from Germany to Japan, first chalked out to carry Netaji to Tokyo, had to be cancelled at the last moment as the plan was leaked out by Count Ciano, the Foreign Minister of Italy, who was suspected to be in link with the British. Alternatively, Netaji moved to Sumatra from Germany after a 120-day submarine journey first by a German U-boat and then by a Japanese submarine, arranging his transhipment from one submarine to other in the mid-sea near Madagascar. Such a non-stop, long-distance journey for over three months and through the enemy-infested water was never made, except an earlier experimental attempt made by an Italian U-boat. No political or military leader of any country of the world ever dared, during the days of the war, such a perilous journey as had been undertaken and completed by Netaji.

WAR OF LIBERATION

Netaji reached Singapore on July 2, 1943. Unfortunately, he reached after an year—too late. Had he succeeded synchronizing his arrival in the East with the August uprising of the people at home, the concept and character of the Indian freedom and the future of the Indian nation would have been different today.

The war of Indian liberation began in March 1944, when the INA along with their Japanese ally started moving towards the Indian frontier. Netaji had barely eight months to prepare for this revolutionary war. What he achieved during this brief period looked almost miraculous.

A skeleton of an Indian National Army and a political organisation of the Indians, called the Indian Independence League, already existed. But Netaji gave them a new look, a new dimension and an unprecedented zeal of militant nationalism. Within eight months, he succeeded in mobilizing three million Indians, living in the far-flung countries of South-East Asia, under the banner of the Azad Hind revolution. All the Indians were galvanized into an undaunted fighting spirit with a pledge to 'unity, faith and sacrifice' for the emancipation of their motherland. 'Total mobilisation for Total War of Indian Liberation' became the battle-cry of all the Indians in all the regions of South-East Asia. All the Indians rose almost to a man in their resolve to fight and die for their national liberty under the leadership of their Netaji.

How could the leader of the Indian national liberation achieve such a miracle in such a short time ? It was the majesty of supreme patriotism in him, his Promethean character as a revolutionary and the magnetic charm of his personality that worked spectacularly behind all his success. The Japanese were over-awed by the dynamism and dignity of his personality. They felt curious to understand what was the secret of the essential character of the mystic in him. Their Government engaged a few important officers to make a clandestine evaluation of the personality of 'Chandra Bose', as the Japanese used to call him.

One such officer, Major Takahashi, reported to his Government that "the Indian leader appeared to me to be a superman. During the three weeks of an inspection tour, he had to replace three aides-de-camp. They were all overcome with exhaustion. Chandra Bose worked 24 hours a day without rest, meeting local Indians and inspecting troops and facilities. No normal person could share his workload."

Another staff officer of the South-East Asia Command of the Japanese Army, a Colonel, made a similar reporting to his Premier Gen. Tojo, and Field Marshal Tarauchi, the Chief of the Southern Command, at a time when they sat in a crucial meeting to finalize the plan for the Imphal offensive. This plan had earlier been shelved but it was revived to consider the request of 'Chandra Bose'. The Colonel told the two war

leaders of Japan: "This Indian leader lives 24 hours of every day only in completely disinterested dedication to the cause of his country's emancipation. He is stoicism itself and has not shown any interest in the common pleasure of life."

Tojo replied, "I am glad that my assessment of the calibre of the Indian leader proved correct."

The plan for the Imphal expedition was approved in this joint meeting. According to Japanese historians, it happened because of the Japanese respect for the views of 'Chandra Bose'.

ASIATIC REVOLUTION

In November 1943, the Japanese Government convened a conference of the East and South-East Asian countries in order to make a declaration about the war objectives of Japan. In it, most of the distinguished nationalist leaders of these countries, like Dr Ba Maw of Burma, Dr Soekarno, Dr Mahammad Hatta and Dr Shahrier of Indonesia, Dr Joseph Laurel of the Philippines, Dr Wang of Nankin (China) and many others participated as regular delegates. Netaji joined it only as a fraternal delegate. He made it clear to Japan that, till India was liberated, his Azad Hind Government would not enter into any international agreement with Japan. According to Japanese historians, this conference of the Asians was intended to make it a 'Tojo show', but, after its deliberations, it ultimately turned to be a 'Chandra Bose show'. The personality of 'Chandra Bose' was found to strikingly dominate the conference and he emerged out of this conference as the most towering personality among the Asian leaders.

In this conference, 'Chandra Bose' took the stand of a strident anti-imperialist and galvanically conceptualized the aims of this historic assembly of the Asians as that of "Asiatic revolution and Asiatic consciousness for Asiatic unity." This conference proclaimed as its objectives freedom and national sovereignty of all the Asiatic nations and mutual co-operation on the basis of the recognition of national sovereignty, of all the Asian countries. At the end of the conference, Gen Tojo announced to hand over the occupied territories of the

Andaman and Nicobar Islands to the Provisional Government of Free India under Subhas Bose.

The authors had the opportunity to meet many of the participants of this conference in 1959-60 in the course of his tour of the East and South-East Asian countries. All of them told the author that they participated in this conference as if under duress, but 'Chandra Bose' changed the whole atmosphere of the assembly by his call for 'Asiatic consciousness for Asiatic revolution'. The returned with the high spirit of Asiatic revolution and with a new zeal of revolutionary idealism as it was imparted to the conference by 'Chandra Bose'.

WAR OF LIBERATION

It was the 'superman' in 'Chandra Bose' who could build up a 'colossal' organization of Indian revolution within only eight months. Subhas was now 'Netaji' everywhere, and his was a miracle name with hypnotic charm for the Indians. His dash, his drive and his determination, the effulging aura of revolutionary idealism around him and the unique majesty of his personality—all together—created an atmosphere of electrifying militant patriotism among Indians in South-East Asia. Before sounding the bugle of 'On To Delhi' for his Army of Revolution in early 1944, what Netaji achieved can be stated in brief:

The formation of the Provisional Government of Free India which was recognized by about a dozen Asian and European countries as the sovereign authority of the Indian people.

'total mobilization' of all Indians for the 'total war of Indian Liberation" under the banner of the Provisional Government of Free India or the Azad Hind Arzi Hukumat with Subhas Bose as its head;

complete reorganisation, revitalization and expansion of the Indian National Army or the Azad Hind Fauj—manned, officered and trained wholly by Indians themselves and equipped mainly with the arms captured from the British Army;

reorganization and restructuring of the political wing of

the Azad Hind revolution, namely the Indian Independence League, and formation of a women's regiment of the INA, called the Rani of Jhansi Regiment, and para-militia body named as the Azad Hind Dal, including a Bala Sena unit;

the establishment of the Azad Hind Bank as the financial and banking institution of the Azad Hind Government and Indians of South-East Asia; and

taking over of the administration of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands by the Azad Hind Government and their renaming as Shahid Dwip and Swaraj Dwip.

NATIONAL UNITY

Netaji always believed that the history, geography and the philosophy of synthesis of the cultural heritage of India ordained the Indian people to become one integrated nation. It was the imperialist policy of the British which was responsible for creating divisions and conflicts among them. He was firmly of the view that until and unless the Britishers were thrown out of India, the unity of the Indian people could never be achieved. He was, therefore, opposed to all moves for a patched-up solution of the politically created Hindu-Muslim tangles under the aegis of the British rulers.

Netaji proved the correctness of his theory of Indian national unity in the absence of the influence of the Britishers in South-East Asia. He achieved the unity of all sections of Indians, cutting across all barriers of race, region, religion, caste, creed and language, into a living solidarity of the Indian people. He innovated the national greeting of 'Jai Hind' to bind the Indians together in an emotional feeling of their oneness. He did not form his Azad Hind Government, Azad Hind Fauj or the Indian Independence League on any communal or sectional consideration or on the basis of the ratio of any kind of reservation for any community. His Azad Hind Government was constituted of Indian representatives from all parts of the country and from all communities on the credibility of their patriotic capability and dedication to the cause of the Indian revolution. A majority of the generals of the highest echelon of the Azad Hind Fauj happened to be Muslims, and those Muslims who came from that region of

India which is now called Pakistan. If a Muslim General commanded a unit, the ranks were found to consist mostly of the Hindus and the Sikhs and the vice versa. But none in the Fauj bothered about who belonged to which community. The majority of the personnel of the supreme body of the War Council happened to be Muslims, but none raised any question about its composition. The Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and Christian officers and men lived together in the same barracks and dined together the same food cooked in the same kitchen. In the battle-field, they fought together hand in hand and shoulder to shoulder and shed their blood together for the liberation of their common motherland.

Even in the socio-cultural and religious spheres, a unique spirit of unity and synthesis of cultural and religious faiths and feelings consolidated the Indians into a community of indivisible fraternal identity. Netaji believed the imperialist theory of Indian nationalism and national unity and also the two-nation theory of the Muslim League by building up an epitome of a glowing image of the future nation of his dream, along with the history of the revolutionary war for India's liberation. This concept of Indian nationalism and national unity of Indians was the greatest achievement of Netaji in the history of the struggle for Indian freedom.

THE HERITAGE OF NATIONAL MOVEMENT

Netaji conceptualized the character and ideals of the Azad Hind revolution along the heritage of the Indian freedom struggle of the past. His Azad Hind revolution proudly projected the history of the Revolution of 1857 and the anecdotes of the bravery and sacrifice of their heroes. The tradition of martyrdom of the revolutionaries was also highlighted. And, the heritage and the tradition of the movement of the Indian National Congress received particular attention of the Azad Hind revolution.

As the Azad Hind revolution had to wage a revolutionary war of national liberation and not any kind of peaceful satyagraha, it had to innovate new ideas, new techniques and new slogans of revolutionary warfare, but still they were projected by Netaji as an extension of the national struggle at

home, especially of the 'August rebellion'. The Azad Hind Government adopted the national flag of the Congress as its State flag. Gandhi cap was used by members of the Indian Independence League with an intention to integrate the Congress sentiment with the INA, the three brigades of which were named as Gandhi Brigade, Nehru Brigade and Azad Brigade. But the insignia of Charkha at the centre of the tricolour flag of the Congresss was replaced by the 'Leaping Tiger' of the standard of Tipu Sultan by the Azad Hind Government.

STRATEGY OF LIBERATION WAR

Netaji was resolutely conscious not to make any attempt to win the war of Indian liberation by the Japanese Army. He was as much a realist as to realize that his three divisions of the INA were no match to the British Army in India. He entered into an agreement with the Government of Japan that for an initial breakthrough into the Indian territory, the Japanese Army will help the INA. Once Imphal was captured and Netaji established his headquarters there, the political and military leadership of the rest of the liberation war would absolutely be with the Azad Hind Government and the Japanese Army would cease to move any further.

Netaji believed that soon after the fall of Imphal when the Indian people would come to know all about the Azad Hind Fauj and the Provisional Government of Free India, the whole mood of the Indian people would change seismically. The Indian men and the officers in the British Army would begin to repeat the role what a large section of the Indian Army played in 1857. After the fall of Imphal, their main bastion in the eastern front, the British Army would be forced to roll back to the Bihar border along the Rajmahal hills to build up their second line of defence. As the INA would move into the heart land of eastern India, the Indian men and officers of the British Army would increasingly join the INA and the process would start snowballing. When the people would come to know more about Subhas Bose and his Azad Hind Fauj, popular uprisings to disrupt the communication

system behind the British Army, would assume a tremendous dimension, many times more rebellions, more wi despread and more effective than the 'August rebellion'.

Netaji called the August rebellion 'a non-violent guerilla warfare' and after the fall of Imphal he hoped to start a *revolutionary Guerilla warfare*' inside India for the success of his 'On To Delhi' Azad Hind war of Indian liberation. He knew that such a war of liberation will be a long-drawn-out one and that is why on the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi in 1943, he told his countrymen: "The final struggle for liberty will be long and hard and we must go on fighting till the last of the Britishers in India is either cast in prison or thrown out of the country. I would like to warn you that after our Army of Liberation sets foot on the Indian soil, it will take at least 20 months, and, perhaps more, to liberate the whole of India from the British yoke. Let us, therefore, gird up our loins and prepare for a long and hard battle."

TRIBUTE TO MAHATMA

In 1943, Gandhi was in prison. Nevertheless, the Mehatma was constantly in the mind of Subhas. He knew he would need the goodwill of Gandhi or at least no opposition from him when the Azad Hind Fauj entered India. Subhas made every effort to cultivate sympathy and support of the supreme leader of Satyagraha at home. In his tribute to the Mahatma on October 2, 1943, Netaji said: "Today, the Indians all over the world are celebrating the 75th birth anniversary of their greatest leader, Mahatma Gandhi. . . The service which Mahatma Gandhi has rendered to India and to the cause of India's freedom is so unique and unparalleled that his name will be written in letters of gold in our national history for all time."

After recounting the broad features of the freedom movement of India, Netaji said further : "After the tragic event of the Jallianwallah Bagh massacre, the Indian people were stunned. . . . and were groping in dark. . . .just at this psychological moment, Mahatma Gandhi appeared on the scene with his novel method of non-co-operation and satyagraha or civil

disobedience. It appeared as if he had been sent by Providence to show the path of liberty. . . . . For 20 years and more, Mahatma Gandhi has worked for India's salvation . . . . No single man could have achieved more in one single lifetime under similar circumstances. . . . Since 1920, the Indian people have learnt two things from Mahatma Gandhi, which are preconditions for the attainment of independence. They have, first of all, learnt national self-respect and self-confidence as a result of which revolutionary fervour is now blazing in their hearts. Secondly, they have now got a countrywide organization for the last war of independence."

Netaji, in this speech, reminded his countrymen: "Mahatma Gandhi has firmly planted our feet on the straight road to liberty. He and other leaders are now rotting behind the prison bars. The task Mahatma Gandhi began has, therefore, to be accomplished by his countrymen, at home and abroad."

Then explaining the necessity of the formation of the Army of Liberation for the final struggle of India's independence, Netaji told: "I would like to remind you that when Mahatma Gandhi commended his non-cooperation programme to the Indian nation at the annual session of the Congress at Nagpur in December 1920, he had said, 'If India had sword today, she would have drawn the sword.' Mahatma had then said that since armed revolution was out of question, the only other alternative before the country today was that of non-cooperation or satyagraha. Since then, times have changed and it is now possible for the Indian people to draw the sword. Indians at home have everything that they need for the final struggle, but they lack one thing—an army of liberation. We are happy and proud that India's Army of Liberation has already come into existence."

HOMAGE TO KASTURBA

When Netaji was about to command his Army of Liberation for the march 'On To Delhi', he was shocked to hear the news of Kasturba's death. Subhas always received a motherly treatment from Kasturba Gandhi. During his last visit to Wardha Ashram in mid-1940, Subhas was overwhelmed by the love and affection of Kasturba shown to him at a time when

sharp political conflicts between him and the Mahatma were going on. In a moving broadcast to the Indian Nation Netaji said on February 22, 1944: "Shrimati Kasturba Gandhi is dead. She has died in British custody in Poona at the age of 74. She died under tragic circumstances. . . a martyr's death. Kasturba Gandhi is second fellow-prisoner of Mahatma Gandhi to die under his very eyes in the custody. The first one is his life-long fellow worker and private secretary, Mahadev Desai. This is the second personal bereavement that Mahatma Gandhi has suffered during his present imprisonment."

Subhas continued: "I pay may humble tribute to the memory of that great lady who was a mother to the Indian people and I wish to express my deepest sympathy for Gandhiji in his bereavement. I had the privilege of coming into frequent contacts with Shrimati Kasturba. She was the ideal of Indian womenhood—strong, patient and silent. Kasturba was the source of inspiration to the millions of India's daughters among whom she moved in the struggle for the freedom of her motherland. From the days of the South African satyagraha she has shared with her great husband the troubles and sufferings which have been their lot for nearly 30 years now. Her many imprisonments seriously impaired her health, but jail had no terror for her even in her 74th year. At any time Mahatma Gandhi launched a civil disobedience movement, Kasturba was at his side in the forefront of the struggle. She had been suffering from heart disease for over four months. But the callous British Government turned a deaf ear to the humanitarian pleadings of the Indian people to release Kasturba on medical grounds. . . .No amount of mental torture or physical suffering that the British can and may inflict on Mahatma Gandhi will make him budge an inch. Mahatma Gandhi called upon the British to quit India and save India from the horror of modern war."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

The 'On-to-Delhi' march of the Azad Hind Fauj began in early 1944 along with its Japanese ally. By the end of April Imphal came under the complete siege of the INA and its ally. A large part of eastern Manipur and some parts of the

Sylhet district of Assam were liberated and placed under the administrative control of the Azad Hind Government. The first flag of Indian freedom was hoisted at Moirong, in the suburb of Imphal, and the headquarters of the INA was also set up there. The siege of Imphal continued for over three months and its fall was expected any moment.

Gandhi was released on April 12, 1944. Netaji felt it very necessary to explain the aim and objective and the political justification of the Azad Hind war to Gandhi. For the success of his strategy of revolutionary war of Indian liberation, Netaji needed the support and sympathy of Gandhi, or at least no opposition from him. All war news were, then, under British censor and for the INA, the Britishers on occasions used a derogatory cryptic term 'JIF' (Japanese Inspired Force) to mislead the people of India.

On July 6, 1944, in a long address over Azad Hind Radio from Rangoon, Netaji made a personal explanation to Gandhi about his role and also the mission of the War of Indian Liberation. In his address, Netaji began by paying his homage to the Mahatma: "For Indians outside India, you are the creator of the present awakening in our country. The high esteem in which you are held by patriotic Indians outside India and by foreign friends of India's freedom was increased a hundred-fold when you bravely sponsored the Quit India Resolution in 1942."

Subhas then explained very poignantly why he took the most fateful decision of his life to go out of India in quest of India's liberty. He told: "I can assure you, Mahatmaji, that before I finally decided to set out on this hazardous mission, I spent days, weeks and months in carefully considering the pros and cons of the case. After having served my people to the best of my ability, I could have no desire to be a traitor. Thanks to the generosity and to the affection of my countrymen, I had obtained the highest honour which it was possible for any public worker in India to achieve. By going abroad on a perilous quest, I was risking not only my life and my whole future career, but, what was more, the future of my party.

"If I had the slightest hope that without action from

abroad we could win freedom, I would have never left India during a crisis. If I had any hope that during our life-time we could get another chance—another golden opportunity for winning freedom, as during the present war, I doubt if I would have set out from home."

The Britishers and the Indian Communists were known in the war days to slander Subhas Bose as a 'puppet' or a 'quisling' of the Japanese. Challenging all such calumny, Netaji told Gandhi: "Can it be possible that I have been deceived by the Axis Powers ? If the British politicians failed to coex or coerce me, no other politician can succeed in doing so. If the British Government at whose hands I have suffered long imprisonment, persecution and physical assault has been unable to demoralize me, no other power can hope to do so. I have never done anything which could compromise in the least either the honour or the self-respect or the interest of my country.

NO COMPROMISE

"Mahatmaji, you know better than anybody else how deeply suspicious the Indian people are of mere promises. I would be the last man to be influenced by Japan if her *declaration of policy had been a mere promise.*"

Reporting about the objective of the Provisional Government of Free India, Netaji said further: "Its one objective (is) the liberation of India from the British yoke through an armed struggle. Once our enemy is expelled from India, the mission of the Provisional Government will be over. The only reward we desire for our efforts, for our suffering, for our sacrifice is the freedom of our motherland. There are many among us who would like to retire from political field, once India is free."

Netaji then reminded the Mahatma that as the Quit India Resolution was not accepted by the British Government, now "an armed struggle is inevitable."

Imphal was then under siege and its fall appeared imminent. In a very optimistic note, Subhas told Gandhi: "India's last war of independence has begun. Troops of the Azad Hind Fauj are now fighting bravely on the soil of India.

This armed struggle will go on until Britishers are thrown out of India and until our Tricolour (national flag) proudly floats over the Viceroy's House in New Delhi."

Finally, the revolutionary pilgrim of India passionately appealed to Gandhi: "Father of our Nation! In this holy war of India's liberation we seek your blessings and good wishes !"

'Father of the Nation'—this is the gloriest of the tributes Subhas paid to Gandhi and the nation, thereafter, accepted it for all time.

What was the response of the Mahatma to this appeal? According to reports from the circles of Gandhi's Ashram, the text of this appeal was communicated to Gandhi. But, nothing has been kept on record regarding his reaction about the revolutionary war waged by Netaji. Later, it came out from a source of the Gandhi Ashram that the Mahatma evinced keen interest in the activities of Subhas. It was known to the inner circles of the Ashram that Gandhi was very eager to contact Subhas and send messengers to the Imphal area. He was keeping himself informed about the activities of Subhas as much as they percolated to him through the war censor. In those critical days of war, he could not say anything in public in support of Subhas, but the non-violent Mahatma did not say a word against Subhas or his armed struggle for India's liberation as well. The British Government made all efforts, at least to extract some kind of condemnation of the activities of Subhas Bose from Gandhi, but they failed. Gandhi was not prepared to do anything against Subhas. Subhas was now more important to him than the ethical issue of violence or non-violence. It is on record that the Mahatma did not utter a single word against Subhas in 1944-1945 to denounce his War of Liberation of India.

NO DEFEAT IN WAR OF LIBERATION

The Azad Hind Fauj and its ally, the Japanese Army, had to retreat, according to British war documents from "within an inch of success." A strategic mistake of the Japanese General, Mutaguchi, foiled the plan of the revolutionary war

of Netaji. Netaji became impatiently eager to reach Imphal without missing even a minute. He advised the Japanese general to leave an outlet open for the retreat of the British Army from Imphal. But, instead, Imphal was kept under siege for about four months, as the Japanese general hoped to capture Imphal with 60,000 British Army and the huge amount of dumped arms, ammunition and other provisions as a solid catch by a single sweep. The INA was waiting just a few miles from Imphal at its headquarters at Moirang. The professional Japanese general failed to grasp the strategy of the revolutionary war of Netaji. He could not realize that the presence of Netaji and the INA at Imphal would have created a volcanic reaction in India. Dimapur had no defence, and, as such, after its evacuation from Imphal, the British would have to roll back to its major second line of defence along the Rajmahal hills of Bihar. In July, it was seen that the beleaguered British Army was about to surrender, when the sudden outbreak of very premature monsoon unexpectedly reversed the whole war situation. After operating for about six months on the soil of India, the INA had to retreat, followed by a debacle later for the Japanese in Burma.

Could the plan of revolutionary war of Netaji be claimed as realistic? Bhulabhai Desai, the chief Congress defence counsel in the historic Red Fort trial of INA officers, had the opportunity to go through all the secret documents of the Government concerning the INA operation around Imphal. He answered this question.

Bhulabhai was no known admirer of Subhas Bose. But, having scanned all "the documents and records" of the INA, he told Netaji's friend Dilip Roy: "Netaji was revealed to me in that awed moment of discovery as a far-seeing statesman, a born realist, a strategist to his finger-tips and an idealist-cum-seer." Continuing in his evaluation of the Azad Hind Liberation War, he said: "It was a colossal aspiration. He had to be both the architect and the builder of his dream... He had no comrade of his calibre to help him. He had to achieve everything with the sole power of his magic personality—an all but incredible miracle to be brought off by his eclectic faith in order that the dream that he had dreamed...

might come true at one bold sweep. This may, indeed, sound like rhetoric but it was within an ace of being encompassed. For had he only been able to take Imphal, the bulk of the Indian Army in India would have deserted the British and flocked to his banner to swell the ranks of the Indian National Army. He could almost claim it as a fait accompli because it was very near."

Netaji had no illusion about the meaning of the retreat from Imphal. It was the beginning of the defeat for Japan in the war. It also meant that his plan for moving towards Delhi via Imphal also failed. But he did not accept the defeat of Japan as the defeat for the INA and he believed that a revolutionary war could never be lost. In the changed war situation, he worked out the next plan for revolution inside India after the war.

When the Japanese Army was falling back hastily, he inspired his Azad Hind Fauj to offer a guerilla type of resistance to the advancing British Army. According to the strategy of classical warfare, it meant disaster for his Army. However, ignoring repeated requests from the Japanese to retreat quickly to Rangoon, Netaji himself took all the risks of moving along with his Army in war fronts. On several occasions he miraculously escaped from being captured by the British.

What Netaji wanted was to create a saga of martyrdom for his Azad Hind Fauj in the war of India's liberation. He also asked his men and officers to fraternize with the Indians in the British Army when they would come in contact with them or fall in their hands. He asked them to tell all about the Azad Hind Fauj and the war of Indian liberation to the Indian men and officers of the British Army. He was not haunted by any sense of defeatism, as he knew that after the end of the war the legends of this Azad Hind revolution will create a seismic situation of a new revolution inside India.

It was a unique example of revolutionary leadership that even in the midst of a glooms atmosphere of losing the war, he succeeded in maintaining the morale of his revolutionary army and the faith of the people of Asia in the ultimate victory of the war of Indian independence. Even in this all-round frustrating situation, Netaji's birthday was observed in Burma,

Malaya, Singapore and Bangkok on January 23, 1945 with spectacular enthusiasm and he was weighed by the people with gold on this occasion. Till the day of the Japanese surrender and Netaji's plunge into unknown again, the faith, confidence and loyalty of the INA and the Indians in South-East Asia in him remained unshaken. It is the lesson of history that a leader is hailed in victory but discarded in defeat, but whether winning the war or losing it, Netaji remained the Netaji of the Indian National revolution in all his undiminished glory to his revolutionary army and to the Indians in South-East Asia.

POST-WAR REVOLUTION

After the defeat of Germany and re-entry of the British Army into Burma, Pandit Nehru, Sardar Patel, Maulana Azad and all other Congress leaders were released. The failure of the Quit India movement following the reverse in the war situation completely demoralized Congress leaders and their frustration was further deepend by the wholly placid political atmosphere in the country. A mood of defeatism seized the minds of Congress leaders, but no such pessimism touched the mind of Netaji although he was passing through the worst period of a dangerous crisis of uncertainty.

Sensing this defeatist mood in Congress circles at home, Netaji told the leaders and the people in India over Singapore Radio in June 1945 : "We may not travel to Delhi via Imphal, but we shall get there all right. This is no rhetoric, nor is it propaganda. It is plain and unvarnished truth. And those who doubt the truth of this statement have only to wait and see. The ways of history—like the ways of Providence—are often mysterious . . . . For the fulfilment of our objective, it was perhaps necessary that the British Indian Army should come to Burma and see the INA. The British Indian Army have now seen us with their own eyes. What is the result ? There is no longer any talk of a puppet army of Japanese Indian Force or J.I.F. Even enemy propagandists now talk, at least, of an INA."

Netaji was sure that the fraternization between the British Indian Army and the INA and the saga of Azad Hind war will create a new revolutionary situation in India after the war.

He was extremely disturbed by the report of the response of Congress leaders to Wavell's offer of Indianization of Viceroy's Council in mid-1945. In a broadcast to Congress leaders, Netaji said : "With all due respect I would like to ask Mahatma Gandhi, Maulana Azad, Pandit Nehru, Sardar Patel and other leaders whether they will take the responsibility of fighting Britain's imperialist war in the Far East and of sacrificing half-a-million Indian lives for the same ?"

He further told his countrymen : "It is because we are living, working and fighting in the presence of death that I have a right to speak to you. Most of you do not know what carpet-bombing is. Most of you do not know what is to be machine-gunned by low-flying bombers and fighters. Most of you have no experience of bullets whistling past you, to your right and to your left. Those who have gone through this experience and have nevertheless kept their morale, cannot overlook Lord Wavell's offer."

He then asked his countrymen : "If you cannot fight the British imperialism with army, then at least keep up moral resistane to our enemy refusing to compromise with him or to fight his imperialist war."

At least the Mahatma did respond to the pleading of Subhas. As long as war continued, he did not allow Congress leaders, on one plea or the other, to accept the Wavell offer and enter into the Viceroy's Executive Council. All his actions showed, after Subhas plunged into the whirlpool of the global war in 1941, that Mahatma Gandhi decided not to oppose Subhas or do anything that might go against him. The Mahatma stuck to this position till the end of the war.

In a major address to Indian leaders, Netaji told them just a month before the fall of Japan: "I am confident if we fight on and if we play our cards well in the international field, we will win our freedom by the end of the war. But if the worst happens and India does not emerge as an independent State by the end of this war, our next plan shall be a post war revolution inside India." He added further in another broadcast to assure Congress leaders in India : "When INA soldiers are taken back to India as prisoners, they would bring a fundamental change in the Indian political situation."

In his last order of the day on August 15, 1945, the day of Japanese surrender, Netaji urged his Army of Revolution and his countrymen : "Never for a moment falter in your faith in India's destiny. Roads to Delhi are many and Delhi still remains our goal . . . . There is no power on earth than can keep India enslaved. India shall be free and before long."

To those, who were still in doubt about the destiny of India's freedom, he told them almost prophetically : "Let them wait until February 1946 and then start criticizing us, if our time-table goes wrong."

CHAPTER 6

The Final Count

WHY did the British finally decide to withdraw from their biggest colonial empire ? While replying to the Tory critics in 1947 in the course of debates on the Indian Independence Bill, the British Prime Minister, Mr Clement Attlee, told the House of Commons "because we were sitting at the top of a volcano in India." Obviously, this volcano was the creation of Subhas Chandra Bose.

A few years after the 'transfer of power', Mr Attlee visited India as a private citizen as a guest of the Government of India, when he frankly disclosed the most vital reason for the British withdrawal from India. According to the report of the former Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court, P.B. Chakravarty, who was then the Acting Governor of the State : "When I was acting as Governor of West Bengal, Lord Attlee . . . visited India and stayed in the Raj Bhavan, Calcutta, for two days. I had a long talk with him about the real grounds for the voluntary withdrawal of the British from India. I put it straight to him like this : 'The Quit India Movement of Gandhi practically died down long before 1947 and there was nothing in the Indian situation at that time which made it necessary for the British to leave India in a hurry. Why did they then do so ?' In reply, Attlee cited several reasons, the most important of which were the activities of Subhas Chandra Bose, which weakened the very foundation of the attachment of the Indian land, air and naval forces to the British Government.

"Towards the end I asked Lord Attlee about the extent to which the British decision to quit India was influenced by Gandhi's activities. On hearing this question, Attlee's lips widened in a twisting smile and he uttered slowly putting

emphasis on each single syllable—*mi-ni-mal.*" (*History of Indian Independence* : Vol : III : By Dr R.C. Majumder).

Every historian, Indian and foreign alike, accorded the fact that after the cessation of the war, the legends of the revolutionary war of Indian liberation led by Subhas Bose entered into India with a volcanic rumble. The placid political atmosphere of India suddenly turned seismic. A surging mood of unprecedented militant nationalism began to sweep the country from one end to the other. The people became aggressively defiant and pro-INA agitations and demonstrations started furiously everywhere. Not only did the people turn manifestly rebellious in their mood, but most significantly, the traditional loyalty of the Indian Army to the British Crown was also found visibly shakened. An insurrectionary atmosphere, more ominous than 1857, appeared to engulf the political scene and the mood of the people of India. The British Government was unexpectedly confronted with a sudden dilemma--either to face a joint uprising of the Indian people and the Indian Army together or decide to quit India. For their own safety and for the preservation of their colonial interests, the Labour Government of Britain preferred to transfer power to the Indians and finally withdraw from its biggest colonial empire.

It is quite known how the legendary image of Subhas Bose captivated the patriotic emotion of the Indian people and now the popular glorification of Netaji and the INA was ringing everywhere in India after the war. Gandhi, who could read the mind of the Indian people almost instinctively, did not miss the meaning of this dramatic change in the mood of the Indian people. In his characteristic style, the Mahatma observed in late 1945 : The hypnotism of the INA has cast a spell on us. Netaji's name is one to conjure with. His bravery shines through all his activities."

It became unmistakably clear in India that the era of Mahatma Gandhi passed on to the era of Subhas Bose. Or, in other words, the era of non-violent *satyagraha* passed into an era of violent revolution. Emphasising this climatic change in the national scene of India, Dr Sitaramayya, wrote: "For a moment the INA overshadowed the names of national

leaders. It looked as though the INA itself eclipsed the Indian National Congress and the exploits of war and violence abroad threw into obscurity the stories of non-violence at home."

After the war, the image of Netaji overshadowed every other leader, even that of the Mahatma, but, historically, it will be too sweeping to admit the version of Lord Attlee that the influence of the activities of Mahatma Gandhi was "minimal" in compelling the British to finally quit India. No doubt, Subhas Bose made the last and the most decisive blow against the imperial authority of Britain over the Indian people; however, it became possible for Subhas to play this historic role because of the fact that its background was created by the activities of Gandhi for over two decades. Neither without recognizing the role of Gandhi nor of Subhas can any complete and realistic appraisal of the character of the history of the Indian freedom movement be made in a correct perspective. The Netaji of the Indian national revolution never tried to minimize the unique role of the Mahatma in the freedom struggle of India.

GANDHIAN ROLE

The Indian National Congress was established in 1885 but it never became a people's organisation nor did it ever thought of any people's movement, what to speak of setting its aim towards the attainment of freedom, till Gandhi took over its reins in 1920. For about 35 years since its birth, the Congress was nothing but an elitist organisation of upper-class Indians working mainly for constitutional reforms. After the 1905 Bengal Anti-Partition Agitation, only the revolutionaries had the independence of India as their objective and fought for its attainment. But as the revolutionaries did not work to build up a people's movement, and as they wanted to win freedom for the people by making extreme sacrifices by the few, their freedom struggle, except an attempted insurrection during the days of World War I, was sidetracked by the activities of revolutionary terrorism. Although the revolutionaries immensely heightened the patriotic spirit of the Indian youths and sharpened the ideal of Indian freedom, the real people's movement for the attainment of India's independence began

only after the advent of the Gandhian leadership. It was Gandhi who succeeded to convert the Congress into an organisation of the people and give them the constructive and agitational programmes together to build up the base of the Indian mass movement.

In his innumerable writings and speeches, Subhas paid eloquent tributes to Gandhi for his inestimable contributions to the struggle for India's freedom. He hailed Gandhi as the maker of the Congress as the mass organization of the partiotic people of India and the 'creator of national awakening.' He pointed out that it was Gandhi who succeeded to unify the patriotic people of India and impart in them a sense of 'self-respect' and 'confidence' for the achievement of freedom. Subhas said again and again that it was Gandhi, like a "man sent by Providence" who introduced the "novel method of satyagraha or civil disobedience as the new weapon of struggle for freedom by the unarmed people of India." He recognized the Non-cooperation Movement of 1921 and the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930 led by Gandhi as two landmarks in the way to Indian freedom. Subhas warmly acknowledged the fact that "Mahatma Gandhi firmly planted our feet on the straight road to liberty." In his sincere homage to the Mahatma, Subhas said : "His services to the cause of India's freedom are unique and no paralleled. No single man could have achieved more in one single life-time under similar circumstances. His name will be written in letters of gold in our national history for all times." Subhas never considered the contributions of Gandhi in any way as 'mi-ni-mal' as Attlee wanted to mean. In his highest appreciation of the contributions of Gandhi in the freedom movement of India, 'rebel Subhas' was, thus, the first Indian who recognized the unique character of the greatness of Gandhi to hail him as "*the Father of the Nation.*"

GANDHIAN METHOD

The Mahatma, leader of the non-violent mass movement of the Indian people, succeeded in laying the basic foundation of the Indian freedom struggle. It was this unique man who roused his countrymen to establish the dignity of their national

identity and assert their right to liberty through the process of mass activities involving struggle, suffering and sacrifice. The Gandhian *satyagaraha* movements of 1921 and 1930 trained the Indian people to defy the British authority and challenge its suzerainty over them.

Swaraj was the goal of Gandhi in 1921 and again 'complete independence' was the objective that he set to achieve in 1930. But he could not attain either, though the people's response to his call in both these struggles was unique and unprecedented. However, although the Gandhian movements failed, yet he emerged after both these movements to re-establish the credibility of his leadership in greater glory and with greater appeal among the Indian people. It happened because his struggle was not a total revolt though it aimed at the defiance of the British rule.

In the mid-thirties, Subhas made a thorough reappraisal of the efficacy of the Gandhian *satyagraha* in achieving India's independence. He raised a very pertinent question—why, notwithstanding the massive response from the people, the Gandhian struggles, one after another, failed to attain their objective ? There was no record of such huge mass movement in any country of the world as it was witnessed in 1921 or in 1930 in India. Nevertheless, Gandhi could not win freedom for India.

In his 1933 London Conference address, Subhas observed that in the course of the civil disobedience movement of 1930, the British administration perceptibly suffered widespread dislocation but after a short period of near-immobilisation it could confidently suppress the people's movement and re-establish its control over the defiant Indians. The British Government succeeded in dealing with the Gandhian movement because the loyalty of the Indian Administrative Service, of the police and of the Indian armed forces—the three pillars of the British rule in India—were not undermined in any way. With their help, the British Government had no major difficulty in suppressing the Gandhian movement of either 1921 or 1930. In his criticism of the Gandhian leadership, Subhas remarked in *The Indian Struggle*: "Gandhi opened a campaign in a brilliant fashion; worked it up with unerring skill; he

moved from success to success till he reached the zenith of his campaign, but after that he was seen to lose his nerve and begin to falter." It happened both in 1921 and in 1930 because, as Subhas believed, the Gandhian movement never aimed at the direct attainment of independence but it ultimately depended on the British response to open negotiations for settling the question of the transfer of political power to Indians. Subhas concluded from his study of the technique of the Gandhian struggle that the Mahatma would, no doubt, succeed in advancing the cause of Indian freedom but his method would not, ultimately, succeed in achieving India's independence.

AMALGAM OF TWO METHODS

The Gandhian technique of satyagraha reached the zenith of its success in civil disobedience of 1930. Thereafter, particularly since the outbreak of World War II, its potentiality began to decline. The Individual Satyagraha of 1940, under the Gandhian leadership, could not evoke any response either from the Indian people or from the British Government. As an alert pragmatist, Gandhi did not miss to learn the lesson from this satyagraha movement. It was, thus, seen as meaningfully striking that although Gandhi commanded the Indian people to 'do or die' in the course of his call for 'open rebellion' in August 1942, he did not talk any more of a *satyagraha* or civil disobedience, nor did he set any traditional programme of the pattern of 1921 or 1930 movement to follow. He left the people to follow their own programme, only indicating that it should be a "swift unarmed revolt."

In this 'last struggle' of Gandhi, the people followed not the known programme of peaceful defiance of law and of courting arrests but what they followed was verily a technique of unarmed insurrection. Orthodox Gandhian disciple, Mushrwallah, editor of the *Harijan*, described the August Movement as a 'non-violent revolution', while Subhas called it non-violent guerilla warfare'. Indeed, the call for the August Rebellion was given by Gandhi but its 12-point insurrectionary programme, though non-violent, was provided by Subhas.

The August Rebellion was in no way a Gandhian movement in the classical sense of the term; it was a mixed struggle,

a kind of an amalgam of the ways and means of Gandhi and the method of Subhas. Indeed, the rebellion signified the transition of the Gandhian peaceful way to the revolutionary way of Subhas. Although Gandhi was the known dictator of the Congress movement of 1942, still, after his release from prison in 1944, he missed no time to disown the responsibility of the August uprising. He said in a statement that what happened after August 8, 1942, " was not a Congress movement; it was a spontaneous upsurge of the Indian people."

Historically viewed, it became obvious that after 1942 the Gandhian era of peaceful satyagraha passed into the era of revolutionary struggle of Subhas Bose. The Indian freedom movement characteristically took a turn towards revolutionary struggle and, during this transitional phase, Netaji emerged as the sole leader of the Indian independence movement. Gandhi and the Congress had nothing to do any more in leading this movement; it was Subhas Bose who alone, as the 'Neta' of the last War of Indian Independence, conducted the last struggle for India's liberation, known in the history as the Azad Hind Revolution. In this revolution Netaji dealt the final and the decisive blow on the bastion of the British rule in India. Even after the war, the saga of the Azad Hind liberation war and the legendary image of Netaji wholly dominated the national scene of India. Gandhi, no doubt, still remained to be recognized as the moral leader, but the blazing image of Subhas began to sweep the patriotic emotion of the Indian people.

BEACON OF REVOLUTION

Subhas Bose could not reach Delhi via Imphal as he had aimed at, but his image, as that of an epic hero of Indian liberation, did reach the heart of India. The Indian people, who were seen drooping under the shadow of defeatism and frustration after the failure of the August Rebellion and particularly after the mighty victory of the British in the war, were suddenly electrified to a beaming spirit by the legends of Netaji and the revolutionary exploits of his Azad Hind Fauj. The Indian people were almost magically galvanized into an unforeseen

spirit of militant nationalism. Cutting across all barriers of caste, creed, community, religion or region, they rose in the united glorification of revolutionary activities of Netaji and the INA. The political situation in India tremendously changed and turned extremely explosive for the British.

Gandhi succeeded in awakening and organising the Indian people to defy the British rule, but still the alien authority continued to dominate India, mainly for two major reasons. The Muslim community in India, in an overwhelming majority, except in the North-West Frontier Province, raised ever mounting communal cries and sided with the British to block the way to India's independence. The loyalty of the Indian armed forces, the main pivot of the imperialist suzerainty over the Indian people, remained unshaken. The Gandhian movements failed to remove these two hurdles but the Azad Hind Revolution under the leadership of Subhas Bose almost knocked them down, clearing the way to finally achieve independence for the united people of united India.

UNPRECEDENTED NATIONAL UNITY

The saga of the Azad Hind war, the united will and the united martyrdom of the Indian people, reflected in the achievements of the Azad Hind Fauj, magically transformed the mood of the Indian people to unitedly hail the INA and glorify its supreme leader. The people of all communities and from every region of India stood solidly behind the INA in demanding the release of the INA officers then under trial at the Red Fort. The men and officers of the INA appeared as national heroes to all Indians. Spontaneously organised people's rallies in adoration of Netaji and his INA burst into spontaneous agitations all over the country. Defying all British repressions, pro-INA meetings and violent demonstrations for the demand of the release of the INA detenus swept the country from one end to the other and the Indian masses became one as all communal cankers vanished. The legacy of the composite character of the INA of the Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and Christian men and officers who created the saga of united sufferings, united sacrifices and united martyrdom led to development of a unique spirit of militant national unity

among all sections of Indians. For the first time all Indians, no matter which community or region they belonged to, shared the common pride and common glory in the achievements of the freedom struggle of the Azad Hind Fauj.

About this spirit of national unity of the INA that captivated the minds of the Indian people, after they came to know about the patriotic exploits of the Azad Hind Fauj, Michael Edwards, the author of the *Last Years of British India*, wrote: "The spectre of Subhas Bose frightened Jinnah." The Qaid-e-Azam of the Muslim League saw the danger to the dream of his Pakistani plan from the INA movement and the legends of Subhas Bose. He made frantic efforts to separate the Muslim men and officers from the rest of the INA ranks but failed miserably. An overwhelming majority of the high officers of the INA belonged to the Muslim community. But all of them remained pledged to the INA ideal of attaining freedom unitedly for the united people of united India.

Jinnah, however, succeeded in misleading a junior Muslim officer of the INA, named Capt. Rashid Ali, to make him agree to be defended by Muslim League lawyers, while the INA Defence Committee under the chairmanship of Bhulabhai Desai stood for all other INA officers then facing trial at the Red Fort. The Muslim League asked the Indian Muslims to observe a separate Rashid Ali Day, but, to the great dismay of Jinnah, this day was observed not dividedly by the Muslims alone but unitedly by all communities, leading to police firings and killings of the demonstrators in many places. Frustrating the communal design of Jinnah, this 'Rashid Ali Day' turned to be a new symbol of national unity.

Noting this unique phenomenon of communal unity in India in post-war days, *The New York Times* wrote: "In spite of an uncompromising struggle between the two factions, . . . for the first time since 1921 Muslims and Hindus together staged street protests and riots against British India in Calcutta, Bombay and New Delhi. The catalytic agent in this case was the Indian National Army, organised by Subhas Chandra Bose." Observing the growing development of Hindu-Muslim unity, this American paper wrote again: "The Indian problem often seems to be one of reconciling the political differences

between the Hindus and the Muslims. . .Lately, there appeared the first serious evidence in India of the anti-white feeling that crops up in other parts of Asia . . . stimulated by the propaganda of Subhas Chandra Bose . . . who won followers among Muslims and Hindus alike."

Verily, Netaji had won the minds and hearts of the Hindus and the Muslims alike in creating the saga of Indian nationalism in the history of the Azad Hind Revolution. For about eight months of the legends of Netaji and the INA surged into India, Jinnah and his Muslim League lost their divisive communal appeal with the Muslim community. The legacy of national unity of the Azad Hind Fauj and the image of Netaji brought about the miracle of national unity in India, generating a new climate of militant nationalism of Hindu-Muslim fraternity all around. Such a splendid scene of national unity was never seen in India at any time before.

LAST BASTION LOST

The loyalty of the British Indian Army in the British Crown was the last bastion of the British hold over India. But the Azad Hind war succeeded in rousing a new patriotic aspiration in the Indian Army. For the first time, a part of the British Indian Army, who were held as prisoners of war, changed their British loyalty and joined the Azad Hind Fauj and fought for the liberation of their country. During the days of the Azad Hind war and, more particularly, after the surrender of the INA, the process of fraternization between the loyal Indian Army and the Liberation Army of Netaji radically changed the spirit and the outlook of the traditionally loyal Indian Army almost as a whole. Hugh Toye, a British army officer and later a biographer of Subhas Bose, informed the British C-in-C, Field Marshall Claude Auchinleck, in late 1945 : "In the 11 months which had elapsed since the first contact of Indian Army, Navy and Air Force with the mass of the INA in Rangoon, there had been widespread fraternization. . . Its result was a political consciousness which the Indian Servicemen had never before." (*Springing Tiger*).

This process of disenchantment of the Indian Army

assumed an alarming proportion for the British Government after they decided to court martial a few high-ranking INA officers at the Red Fort. According to Michael Edwardes : "The Government of India had hoped, by prosecuting members of the INA, to reinforce the morale of the Indian Army. It succeeded only in creating unease, in making the soldiers feel ashamed that they themselves supported the British. If Subhas and his men had been on the right side—and all India now confirmed that they were—then Indians in the Indian Army must have been on the wrong side. It slowly dawned upon the government of India that the backbone of the British rule, the Indian Army, might now no longer be trustworthy. The ghost of Subhas Bose, like Hamlet's father, walked the battlements of the Red Fort, and his suddenly amplified figure overawed the conference that were to lead to independence."

While the INA officers were being tried inside the Red Fort, protest demonstrations and violent agitations against the trial were raging in every part of India leading to killings of many patriots in police firings. Most significantly, Indian men and officers belonging to the British Army, Navy and Air Force were also seen to openly sympathize with these popular agitations and even openly participate in the pro-INA demonstrations in various parts of India.

This alarming development in the Indian Army caused great anxiety in the British Army command. In an effort to ascertain the views of the Indian officers, whose number rose from 400 to about 8,000 during the war Gen. Auchinleck conducted a secret opinion poll. The result of the poll completely astounded the Chief of the British Indian Army Staff. It showed that 95 per cent of the Indian Army officers considered the men of the INA as patriots and favoured their release. On receipt of the result of this secret opinion poll, the C-in-C lost no time in sending urgent communications to both the Viceroy and the British Prime Minister. In his report, the C-in-C wrote : "I do not think any senior British officer today knows what is the real feeling among the Indian ranks regarding the INA..... Any attempt to force a sentence (given by the Red Fort Military Tribunal) would have led to chaos and probably to mutiny and dissension in

the army culminating in its dissolution." Supporting the views of Gen. Auchinleck, Lt. Gen. Tucker of the Eastern Command also observed in a secret note sent to his high command : "Never, I believe, has the loyalty and solidarity of any army been subjected to such a strain and to such determined and ingeneous pressure to subvert it . . . . The INA was. . . threatening to tumble down the whole edifice of the Indian Army."

In late January 1946, a 10-member delegation of the British Parliament visited India to make an on-the-spot study of the effect of the pro-INA agitations and the Indian situation in general. Reporting to the British Government, Members of the British Parliament wrote : ".....The danger that exists is of real disorder" like "the eruption of the volcano" and "if the British Government fails to find soon a way of handing over smoothly, there may be a revolution to drive them out." To this report a Tory M.P. further added : "Circumstances this time have been far less favourable to the British than in 1857. . . . we were able to bear the strain in those days, but we could not do so today without the possibility of cracking under it."

While pro-INA agitations were growing rampantly all over the country, Lord Wavell also wrote to Mr Attlee : ". . . .it will be unwise to try the Indian Army too much in suppression of their own people and, as the time went on, the loyalty of even Indian officials, the Indian Army and the police might be problematical."

In his critical evaluation of the success and failure of the Gandhian movement of 1930, Subhas Bose, very pointedly, observed in his London speech in 1933 that until and unless the "loyalty of the Indian officials, Indian Army and the police" to British Crown could be knocked down and these vital forces of the British administration won over by the nationalist movement, Indian independence will remain a distant dream. This objective—the pre-condition for achieving Indian freedom—was splendidly achieved during and after the Azad Hind war led by Netaji.

Some of the reports of the delegation of the British Parliament were publicly known, but other official reports,

particularly about the acute discontentment in the Indian Army, were kept secret. However, facts about the transformed mood of the Indian Army were not unknown to Gandhi, Patel, Nehru, Azad and other Congress leaders. Many Indian officers of the British Army met these leaders and sought their moral support in case they decided to rise against the British Government. Tendulkar, a biographer of Gandhi, mentioned about many facts how the Indian Army was found agitated for a revolt like the Mutiny of 1857. Maulana Azad wrote in *India Wins Freedom* that officers of the Indian Army approached Congress leaders on many occasions for guiding them to take up arms against the British. It was also seen in those days that men and officers of the Indian Army very often participated in the prayer meetings of the Mahatma. Quite surprisingly, these men of the defence services, while attending the meetings of the non-violent Mahatma, were found to raise slogans in praise of Netaji of Azad Hind Fauj. During these days, the Indian Army became very restive, having no more an unshakable faith in the British Crown. They were, as if, ready for insurrection, waiting for the moral support from the Congress. Netaji, though he lost the battle of Imphal in 1944, won the penultimate round of the revolutionary war by winning the loyalty of the British Indian Army for the cause of Indian liberation. The Indian Army developed a patriotic mood to rise against the British. The loyalty of the Indian Army to the British Crown was gone and this radically patriotic change in the outlook of the British Indian Army was caused by the great impact of the revolutionary war of the Azad Hind Fauj led by Subhas Bose.

POST-WAR REVOLUTION

Netaji almost apocalyptically predicted, just a month before the fall of Japan, about the inevitability of the outbreak of "a post-war revolution inside India after the war." He urged Congress leaders not to compromise with the British on the question of India's freedom. He asked them to 'wait till February 1946' when, as he visualised, the Indian situation was likely to ripen for the revolutionary uprising of the Indian people and the Indian Army.

Netaji's political prophecy proved absolutely correct. By February 1946 the Indian situation turned extremely explosive. The communal cries of the Muslim League were silenced in the face of the united pro-INA agitations of the people of all communities. The militant mood of the people had a series of violent outbursts in different parts of the country. The situation became almost volcanic when the Indian Army began to openly side with the pro-INA agitations. The pent-up grievances of the Indian Army, raised to many millions during the war days; the issues of their pay, pension, allowances; the question of their rehabilitation after demobilisation; the aggrieved feelings about invidious discrimination between the British and Indian men and officers—all such matters aggravated their disaffection further. At no time before had the Indian situation turned so ignitable, so revolutionary, so explosive as it happened to be in February 1946.

All signs of a 'post-war Revolution' were getting manifestly clear. Frightened Britishers forewarned their countrymen in India, through the *Statesman* of Calcutta and the *Times of India* of Bombay, the two British-owned newspapers of those days, to arrange for emergency shelters in case of any untoward happenings like that of 1857. The day of reckoning had, thus, finally come. The tocsin of the predicted post-war revolution was sounded in the morning at Karachi port on February 19, 1946, and the Indian men and officers of the Royal Indian Navy rose in revolt there. It was followed by other Indian ratings in the Royal Indian Navy at Bombay and the revolt also spread to all other parts in India.

The situation turned more insurrectionary when the Indian officers of the Royal Indian Air Force in frayed tempers of insubordination declared a general strike at Calcutta, Delhi and other air force bases. Officers in the British Army also joined these strikes in many places like Jabbalpore, Delhi and some other cities.

At Karachi and Bombay, guns zoomed between the British royalists and the Indian rebels of the Navy. The people all over the country expressed their solidarity with the Indian

rebels in the Navy and the Army. Street fightings started at Bombay and other places in support of the naval uprisings. Many people were killed at Bombay, Karachi and other parts of the country. Thus the spectre of 1857, more furious in its omens, began to haunt the Britishers.

It turned to be the most critical moment for the Indian leaders to decide whether to seize the opportunity and use it boldy to achieve complete liberty of the united people of united India. Jinnah felt overawed and outmanoeuvred by these militant uprisings. For the first time, and almost in a decisive mood, the Indian Army and the people joined hands to demand freedom for their motherland. Freedom was, indeed, found knocking at the door of the Congress at this most fateful hour in the history of Indian independence.

POST-WAR REVOLUTION DECRIED

The Indian situation had turned totally placid after the failure of the August Rebellion of 1942 and the people had remained miserably emasculated till the end of the war. Gandhi and all leaders of the Congress faced a situation of complete wilderness and frustration. But the situation quite unexpectedly, and yet almost in seismic fury, changed by the miracle of the sudden blast of the saga of the Azad Hind war and the emergence of the blazing image of Subhas Bose as the Netaji of the people in the national scene of India. The Congress leaders were initially very reluctant to respond to the people's upsurge in the glorification of Netaji and his Azad Hind Revolution. After all, the legends and the legacy of Subahs Bose and his Azad Hind Fauj were totally alien to the culture of peace and non-violence of the Congress. But as the people moved ahead, tremendously hailing the Azad Hind Revolution of Subhas Bose, despite the initial reluctance and apathy of the Congress, its leaders ultimately decided to utilise it for the purpose of reviving the flagging morale of the Congress and restoring the faith of the people in its leadership. The pro-INA agitation, thus, became the major platform of the Congress soon after the end of the war.

Congress leaders also joined the popular chorus on glorifying Netaji and the INA. But they merely desired to utilise the

mass support for the Azad Hind Fauj without understanding how the pro-INA agitations were leading the country towards a situation of revolutionary uprisings as predicted by Netaji. Nehru in his valuable rhetoric said in early 1946 at the time of the Red Fort trial of the INA officers : "The trial dramatized the old contest: England versus India. It became in reality not merely a question of law. . . .but rather a trial of strength between the will of the Indian people and the will of those who hold power in India." Assuming a vaunted mantle of a revolutionary only a month before the outbreak of the 'national mutiny', Nehru said in a public statement : "It was India's duty to revolt and if the country was not prepared for a revolution, it was a dead nation."

No, the nation was not dead—the Indian people and the Indian Army responded splendidly to the call of the post-war revolution of Netaji, but it was the Congress leaders—a Fabian revolutionary like Nehru, the most drummed up 'Iron man' of the Congress like Sardar Patel and all others of their kind—who trembled at the sight of the first flare of the predicted 'post-war revolution.' The British Government were terribly frightened by the fiery episode of the naval uprising. The Congress leaders, were frightened more by the rumblings of the impending revolution. They, occasionally, talked of revolution, but for them revolution meant satyagraha—a peaceful violation of law, peaceful courting of arrest and quietly remaining in prison in higher classes and then coming out of it to be received with garlands and the cheers in reception meetings. But for Subhas revolution meant something else. He predicted that 'post-war revolution' means a revolution of the kind of 1857. Nehru, Patel, Azad and all other Congress leaders got unnerved by the 'naval mutiny' and the barricade fightings in the streets of Bombay. These peacefully jail-going leaders could not muster courage to lead the revolution, or at least lend moral support to the Indian men and officers of the Navy, the Army and the Air Force. Instead, they assumed a pious posture of the champions of non-violence.

This time the role of Gandhi was also different. In 1942, Gandhi talked of 'unarmed revolt' and of 'open rebellion' but in February when the 'open rebellion'—the 'post-war

revolution—seemed to open the road to freedom, he also remained silent and again talked of peace and non-violence. The Mahatma did not lend any support to it and again assumed the pre-1942 role of the Messiah of non-violence.

But Nehru, Patel, Azad and others who never accepted non-violence as any creed but only as a convenient policy also suddenly became defenders of peace and non-violence and began to decry, denounce and condemn the naval uprising, calling it "violence, chaos, anarchy, hooliganism" and what not. Relieving the British Government of their extreme anxiety, Nehru and Patel asked the men and officers of the navy to surrender to the British and lay down arms. It was the moment to make a new history of India. The Congress leaders could at least refuse to denounce the 'naval mutiny' and instead send an ultimatum to the British Government to immediately handover power to the Congress—the only organisation fighting for freedom. But when freedom for the united people of united India was knocking at the door of the Congress, the party could not muster courage to seize the historic opportunity. Netaji prepared the background and even precisely predicted the timing of the 'post-war revolution' to break out in February 1946. The revolution indeed broke out exactly in the same month but Congress leaders became too afraid to avail the last opportunity of securing complete independence for a united India. Verily, freedom knocked at the door of the Congress, but the frightened Congress leaders remained shut up in their shell of abject inactivity under the cover of high-flown shibboleths of non-violence and peaceful means of attaining independence.

TRAGEDY OF INDIAN INDEPENDENCE

The flaring fury of the 'post-war revolution' completely dazed the Congress leaders. They were terrified by the spectre of an imminent bloody upsurge of the Indian Army and the people. Mahatma Gandhi was also found to relapse into his old mood of non-violence, although for all practical purposes he conceded in the course of the Quit India Movement of 1942 that the claim of the means of non-violent satyagraha lost its earlier potentiality to secure independence. However, during

this critical moment the, British Government did not miss the cataclysmic meaning of the 'naval mutiny' and the 'general strikes' resorted to almost simultaneously by the Indian Navy, Army and the Air Force. The British Government had to make a choice either to face a situation more disastrous for them than what happened during the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 or the Quit India Movement. In their own interest and for the safety of the Britishers in India, the war-exhausted Britain made the final decision to leave its Indian empire for good. The 'mutiny' of the Indian Navy broke out on the morning of February 19, 1946, and the same evening a special session of the House of Commons was summoned hurriedly. For the last four months, since the pro-INA agitations spread out all over India and seriously affected the loyalty of the British Indian Army, the British Government was found vacillating as to its ultimate policy regarding the colonial India. But after the sounding of the tocsin from the 'naval mutiny', the British Government missed not a single day to finally announce their decision to transfer power to Indians and set up a Cabinet Committee called the Cabinet Mission for negotiating with Indian leaders for the purpose.

TRAGEDY OF INDEPENDENCE

The Congress immediately welcomed the British decision and got embroiled in the intrigues of a negotiated settlement on the issue of India's independence. The Muslim League had nothing to do on this vital question except raising communal cries for seeking British complicity in its favour. The attitude of the Congress completely frustrated the hope of the 'post-war revolution'. The situation, thereafter, was menacingly manipulated by the Muslim League, with the patronage of the British Government, into a vicious cycle of communal reactions. The mood of militant patriotism engendered by the legacy and the legends of Netaji and his INA began to sharply die down after the predicted 'post-war revolution' was scuttled at its very outset. The Congress got pathetically entangled in the trap of negotiations with the Muslim League on the issue of the transfer of power, with the British to act as the absolute arbitrator to finally decide about the destiny of India.

In 1934, Subhas made a very harsh comment regarding the ultimate fate of the Gandhian method in its efficacy to finally achieve independence. He wrote in *The Indian Struggle* under the headline, 'The Role of the Mahatma': "Mahatma Gandhi has rendered and will continue to render phenomenal service to his country. But India's salvation will not be achieved under his leadership." Subhas came to this conclusion, not for any disregard for Gandhi and about his greatness, but because of the limitation of the efficacy of his non-violent means of satyagraha and his final reliance on a negotiated settlement with the British for a peaceful transfer of power to the Indians. He firmly believed that with the imperialist authority of the British as the final arbitrator for settling the issue of transfer of power, Indians would never succeed in attaining desired independence for their motherland.

In his address at the Haripura Congress in 1938, Subhas warned Congress leaders regarding the futility of a negotiated settlement on the issue of independence. He said: "I have no doubt that the British ingenuity will seek some constitutional device to partitioning India and thereby neutralizing the transference of power to the Indian people." This warning he made two years before the Muslim League demanded Pakistan. Again in his vehement opposition to the Wavell Proposal to divide India as the precondition to the transfer of power, Netaji in a broadcast from Rangoon in late 1944 appealed to the leaders of the Congress not to accept partition and compromise with Britain. In it he said in an emotionally charged voice: "We have resolved to create a united and free India. . . Therefore, we shall never be a party to compromise with Britain . . . We have realised that to divide India will ruin it economically, culturally and politically . . . I wish to remind both the Congress and the Muslim League leaders that even if Pakistan is conceded, it will not solve our problems. . . . I vehemently oppose the Pakistan scheme of vivisection of our motherland. Our divine motherland shall not be cut up."

The stand of the Mahatma regarding the Pakistan scheme was the same as that of Netaji. He made innumerable statements opposing the partition of India. He categorically told the Congress Working Committee in early 1947 : "If the

Congress wishes to accept partition it will be over my dead body. So long I am alive, I will never agree to the partition of India. Nor will I, if I can help it, allow the Congress to accept it."

However, Gandhi could not or did not oppose partition at the most crucial moment of the acceptance by the Congress. He got a shocking hint in advance from Lord Mountbatten that his two most trusted lieutenants, Patel and Nehru, had already reduced him to the status of a 'nobody' of the Congress. When Gandhi met the Viceroy for the first time, according to the account of Prof. Nirmal Bose, who was then a secretary of Gandhi, Mountbatten, while receiving Gandhi at the Viceregal Palace in Delhi, told the Mahatma a very blunt truth, humorously though : "Mr. Gandhi, today the Congress is with me and not with you." Gandhi was stunned to hear the new Viceroy but in his ever unfailing wit he made a prompt and pointed repartee : "Well, the Congress might be with you, but the people are with me."

Verily, the people of India were with Mahatma, though he was reduced to a lonely 'fakir'—forlorn, forsaken and deserted by Congress leaders who owed everything of their eminence to him. But, for reasons which remained a mystery, Gandhi did not act—he perhaps made the disastrous political blunder of his life by asking the AICC to support the Congress resolution for the acceptance of partition of the country. The history, culture and heritage of India—all together was undone by a pack of men usurping the sovereign right of the entire Indian nation. With the support of Gandhi, the Congress—157 Congressmen voting in favour, 29 against and 32 Congress Socialists abstaining—passed the resolution to divide India and accept a dominion status for a divided India of the divided people of the ancient land.

At midnight on August 15, 1947 when Nehru unfurled the flag of a divided but free India in Delhi, Mahatma Gandhi was far away in Calcutta trying to pacify communal fanatics there. The Father of the Nation declined to send even any message on the occasion of the transfer of power. On this day, when Sarat Chandra Bose visited Gandhi, then camping in a Calcutta Muslim *bustee*, the Mahatma murmured in a

deeply anguished voice: "Only Subhas could save the country today!"

God alone knows where Subhas was on that fateful day. Had he been in India he could have stood by the side of Gandhi and indeed, save India, save the history, culture and unity of the Indian people and achieve complete independence of a united India in keeping with the pledge of innumerable martyrs of the freedom struggle. Nehru and Patel or even Jinnah would not have dared to mull, maim or truncate the ancient motherland of the Indian people.

What India achieved is not the independence of the dream of either the Mahatma or the Netaji. Gandhi had warned the Congress Working Committee that it could accept partition only over 'my dead body'. It actually happened to the eternal shame for the Indian people, not before partition but after it. Pakistan did come into being, alas, over the dead-body of the Mahatma!

BRITISH WITHDRAWAL

For a proper evaluation of the history of Indian independence, the most pertinent question needs to be finally answered —why the Britishers decided to ultimately withdraw from their biggest colonial empire ? It was not unknown to them that their withdrawal from India will set the process of an irresistible political catalysis for the liquidation of their other empires as well. Nevertheless, what in the last analysis compelled them to quit India ? It is often claimed that the British had to leave India (now called Indian subcontinent) because of Gandhi and the Indian independence was the unique triumph of the Gandhian means of non-violent and peaceful mass movement alone. On the contrary, Mr Attlee, who piloted the Indian Independence Bill in the British Parliament observed that they had to hand over power to Indians after the war because of the "activities of Subhas Bose." This view has been supported by most of the contemporary British historians dealing with the affairs of the last days of the British rule in India. However, neither of the views presented a complete picture of the compulsion that developed behind the British

decision to withdraw from India. Britain had to ultimately relinquish its imperalist hold over the Indian people because of the combined activities of Gandhi and Subhas—one after the other.

Gandhi played a pioneering role in the awakening of the Indian people and making them resolutely demand their independent national identity. The two historic people's movements led by him in 1921 and 1930 inexorably opened the way to India's freedom. He gave the Indian people a new weapon of non-violent satyagraha with which they acquired their self-confidence to defy the alien authority over them. Gandhi continued to preside over the destiny of the Indian freedom movement for over two decades. However, since 1940, the potentiality of non-violent satyagraha began to decline and during the August Movement of 1942 it proved quite inadequate to win freedom. Mahatma Gandhi succeeded in making the Indian people defiant of the British administration over them, but its two vital pillars—the Indian Army and the Police—remained unshakable in spite of repeated Gandhian movements. With the help of these two loyal forces, the British could continue to control the Indian people till the end of World War II. It was Subhas Bose who finally cleared the last hurdles in the way to Indian freedom by winning the loyalty of the Indian Army and the police for the cause of India's emancipation.

Since the magnificent event of the escape of Subhas from India, the Gandhian era of non-violent satyagraha perceptibly passed into an era of revolutionary exploits of 'Netaji'. The 1942 Quit India Movement characteristically marked the significance of this transaction. After the outbreak of World War II, Gandhi, no doubt, continued to be morally recognized as the national leader of the Indian people, but the actual leadership of the struggle for India's emancipation had now indisputably gone into the hands of the Netaji of the Indian national revolution.

The British always maintained an attitude of tolerance towards Gandhi as they had no fear of facing any element of surprise and insurrectionary violence in the Gandhian satyagraha. What they actually feared were the activities of the

revolutionaries. The British, thus, did not hesitate to resort to all brutal measures to crush the activities of the revolutionaries from the very beginning. Hundreds of revolutionaries embraced martrydom and hundreds more were kept in prison without trial for years, varying altogether from 10 to 30 years. However, the mission of the revolutionaries ultimately found its final and the highest fulfilment in the revolutionary war of Indian liberation led by Subhas Bose.

According to Maichael Edwardes "...the British had not feared Gandhi, the reducer of violence; they no longer feared Nehru... . The British, however, feared Subhas Bose or rather the violence he represented." He further added : "Only one major Congress leader, Subhas Chandra Bose, was a Kshatriya. Subhas took a typical Kshatriya course by attempting to overthrow the British by violence . . . . Only one outstanding personality took a different and violent path, and, in a sense, India owes more to him than to any other man."

Subhas, the Netaji of the Indian Revolution, by waging the war of independence, and, thereafter, creating the legacy and the legends of exploits of the Azad Hind Fauj, finally succeeded in knocking down the traditional loyalty of the British Indian Army to the British Crown and, thus, finally breaking the backbone of the British administration in India. This last revolutionary act of Subhas Bose finally compelled the British to quit India. Answering the ultimate question why the British decided to leave India after the war, another British historian, Alastis Lambe, wrote : "The agitation against their (INA) trial when the war was over, together with 1946 mutiny in the Indian Navy, seemed to suggest that the British could not rely much longer on the Indian forces to keep India under the British rule. This realisation, more than anything else, probably enabled British minds to accept the inevitability of Indian freedom. . . The British, it seemed, gave in only when by so doing they gave themselves more security than they could have obtained had they continued to resist."

In the final count, regarding the evaluation of the history of India's freedom, it has to be admitted that neither Gandhi alone, nor Subhas alone, but the two together in successive phases, played the most fundamental roles as two liberators

of the Indian people. The Gandhian satyagraha inspired the Indian people to defy the British rule and the revolutionary exploits of Subhas knocked down the loyalty of the Indian Army and these two achievements conjointly completed the cycle of the compulsion for the British withdrawal from India. Gandhi and Subhas are the two co-architects, two supreme makers of the struggle for Indian freedom. This truth—an irrefutable truth as it is—will be realized truthfully when the history of Indian freedom becomes free from the parochialities and prejudices of the contemporary policies. It will also be realized further that what India achieved in the process of attaining freedom is neither the fulfilment of the mission of the Mahatma nor of the Netaji of the Indian people.

CHAPTER 7

Two True Indians

WHAT is the fundamental source of personal faith or socio-political thinking of Mahatma Gandhi and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose ? Is it essentially common or contradistinctively divergent ?

The political image of Subhas, as emerged during the days of the freedom struggle, appeared as overtly irreconcilable with the image of Gandhi. It was, therefore, believed that Subhas had little in common with the philosophical as well as socio-cultural outlook of Gandhi. But now, when the waves of conflicting emotions of the politics of the days of the freedom movement have settled down, a deeper inquiry into the characteristics of the inner pulsations of their missionary lives will reveal that these two men of destiny of modern India were much nearer to one another than commonly believed otherwise.

Above all and everything, Gandhi and Subhas were two true Indians. They lived and they worked essentially as two true Indians. All the essentials of their missions they conceptualized, they had them in their deep faiths in this feeling. India they viewed as much more than a mere country—they looked upon it as the perennial source of their all inspirations, all values and all dreams that they cherished all along. India appeared, indeed, a spiritual embodiment of an eternal value to them. To understand the essential characteristics of the personalities of Gandhi and Subhas, this Indian characteristic of their outlook of life have to be understood in its primal appeal.

The personal and political philosophies of Gandhi and Subhas emanated from their fundamental faith in the Indian values and in their sense of identity with the feeling of 'Indian-

ness' or 'Indianism'. From the same source of the fundamental concept of spiritual values of India, a Vaishnav in Gandhi blossomed into a political Mahatma and a Kshatriya in Subhas effulged in the image of a revolutionary Netaji. The political manifestations of their personalities were apparently different but the inspirations that worked behind them were principally the same. Both of them had solemn faith in the values of Indian culture and civilization, and this faith inspired them to build up the basic traits of their personalities and evolve their ideological missions that they pledged to fulfil for rebuilding a new India.

QUEEN OF THEIR ADORATION

Gandhi's adoration for India was all-absorbing. In expressing his finer sentiments about India, he said : "India to me is the dearest country in the world, not because she is my country but because I have discovered the greatest good in it. Everything in India attracts me. It has everything that a human being with the highest possible aspiration can want. I cling to India like a child to its mother's breast because I feel she gives me the spiritual nourishment that responds to my highest aspiration."

The feeling of adoration for India in the case of Subhas was as ascetic as his spiritual preceptor, Swami Vivekananda. Like Vivekananda, Subhas always worshipped India as his 'divine motherland'. Subhas also had the same feeling as Sister Nivedita said about her Master that "the queen of adoration was his motherland. There was a cry within her shores that did not find in him a responsive echo."

Why Gandhi and Subhas entertained such a passionate admiration for India ? Was it a kind of chauvinist display of any overzealous sense of their patriotism ?

Gandhi, who had his education in England and who came in contact with many enlightened Englishmen, could hardly be called an obscurantist or as any chauvinist. He noted with gratitude in his autobiography how he had been influenced in building his personal character and evolving his socio-political ideas by the thoughts of many saints and savants of the

Western world. As he possessed an open mind, he never hesitated in accepting any good ideas from any quarter, but he was always opposed to be swept away from his own Indian moorings. He always held the view that India should remain truly Indian in her concepts of essential values. Disagreeing with those English-educated people who wanted Indians to adopt the Western way of life, Gandhi said very frankly : "If we endeavour to copy Western civilization, it will mean ruin for India . . . There is nothing to prevent me from profiting by the light that comes out of the West. Only I must take care that I am not overpowered by the glamour of the West." In a symbolic way, he added further : "I do not want my house to be walled on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any. I refuse to live in other people's house as an interloper, a beggar or a slave."

Subhas was born in an aristocratic family which was quite modern in its socio-cultural outlook. He had also his school and college education in Christian institutions. He passed the ICS examination in London and obtained a Tripos in Moral and Mental Sciences from the Cambridge University. His outlook of life was known as very modern and progressive. While in England, he made extensive studies, about world history and ancient and modern philosophies—the two subjects which were very dear to him. He also tried to know, as much as he could, all about the modern political, socio-economic and cultural ideas and theories that developed in modern Europe. However, though always he was anxious to enrich himself with the new ideas and new thinkings of the West, like Gandhi, he remained unwavered in his faith in the cultural heritage of India. He was very keen in his interest in the latest socio-political theories and systems that developed in Europe, including Russia, but his essential faith remained ever rooted in the spiritual and cultural values of India. About his Indian outlook, Subhas said as frankly as Gandhi : "I am not one of those who in their zeal for modernism forget the glories of the past. We must take our stand on the past. India has a culture of her own which she must continue to develop along her own

distinctive channels. We must resist the cry 'back to the Vedas', on the one side, and, on the other side, the meaningless craze for fashion and change in modern Europe." He reiterated the same views in a more objective way when he said in his Tokyo University speech in 1944 : "We want a modern India based on the past...We want to build up a new and modern nation on the basis of our old culture and civilization."

It is known how after the British conquest of India and the introduction of English education and Western life-style many English-educated leading Indians wanted to adopt Western culture and Western outlook of life and transform India into a kind of a replica of the West. When India was passing through such a cultural crisis, a galaxy of Indian saints and savants, like Dayananda, Vivekananda, Aurobindo, Rabindranath Tagore and others, made a rediscovery of the fundamental values of India out of the debris of socio-cultural degeneration of the late medieval period of the Indian history. They pioneered a powerful movement of national renaissance for rebuilding the outlook of the emerging new nation of India in accordance with the heritage of Indian culture and civilization. Gandhi and Subhas earnestly followed the legacy of this cultural renaissance of India and hoped to orient their outlook of national ideology of India accordingly.

REMARKABLE FEATURE

What is the special features of the history of Indian civilization that so abidingly impressed Gandhi and Subhas ?

About it Gandhi observed : "India is one of the few countries of the world which have witnessed the fall of many civilizations, herself remaining scatheless." Thus, Gandhi found, looking into the history of the civilization of the mankind, that while many old civilizations perished, the Indian civilization, in spite of its hoariness, continued to exist and live 'scatheless' following essentially its ancient characteristics even in modern days.

Subhas echoed the views of Gandhi about the Indian civilization in many of his writings and speeches. He dealt with the subject, quite dissertatively in *The Indian Struggle*

about which he succinctly emphasised again in his Tokyo speech. In it he said : "What is India in reality ? No doubt, we have a very ancient civilization, but unlike other ancient civilizations, such as Egypt or Babylon, Phoenicia or Greece, the ancient culture and civilization of India is not dead. It still lives in the present. And we Indians today think the same thoughts, and have the same feelings, the same ideals of life, as our forefathers who lived 2,000 or 3,000 years ago. In other words, there is a continuity, extending from ancient times till the present day, "which is in some ways a remarkable thing in history. Now, in order to understand India, this fundamental fact should first be understood, namely, that India of the past is not dead. India of the past lives in the present and will live in the future." In fact, Subhas emphasised again and again for his countrymen to understand and appreciate the fundamental characteristics of their civilization for rebuilding the future of their nation on the basic edifice of their own cultural heritage.

The unique vitality of the Indian civilization which enabled it to withstand the test of time and innumerable crises, from within and without, throughout many millennia deeply impressed Gandhi and Subhas. It is not for mere antiquity but for its inherent strength to survive and grow that led them to inquire into the secret of its continuity. They believed that the Indian civilization continued to live, while other ancient civilizations of the world passed into oblivion, because it possessed an unconquerably perennial concepts of higher values. They, thus, further asked : What are the essential characteristics of these values of the Indian civilization ?

NO TRADITIONALISM

Though very near to one another in their ideological aspirations to inherit the cultural values of India, Gandhi and Subhas were no blind supporters of any and every traditions and customs that crept into the social life of India as any essentials of the Indian civilization. Thus said Gandhi : "India is one of the few nations on the earth which have retained some of the ancient institutions, although they have been overlaid with superstition and error. But she has hitherto shown

an inherent capacity for purging herself of error and superstition." On another occasion he said in a forthright voice : "I do not hold that everything ancient is good because it is ancient. I do not advocate surrender of the God-given reasoning faculty in the face of ancient tradition. Any tradition, however ancient, if inconsistent with morality, is fit to be banished from the land. Untouchability may be considered to be an ancient tradition, the institution of child-widowhood and child marriage may be considered to be ancient tradition, and even so many ancient horrible beliefs and superstitious practices. I would sweep them out of existence if I had the power."

Subhas had also been equally unsparing in his tirades against vicious superstitions and traditions that stood in the way of social progress of modern India. He wrote : "What has brought about India's downfall in the material and political sphere ? It is her inordinate belief in fate and in the supernatural...(and) her indifference to modern scientific development. For the people so prone to mysticism and supernaturalism, the only hope of political salvation lies in the growth of sane rationalism and modernization of material aspects of life."

As a devout follower of Vivekananda, Subhas was as vehement as his spiritual master in fulfilling the mission of socio-cultural liberation of the Indian people. He wanted to build up India as a modern nation and provide her people with the modern amenities of life. However, he wanted to build up India, like Gandhi, in an Indian way and in accordance with the heritage of the Indian culture and civilization.

SPIRITUAL HUMANISM

Why did the Indian civilization continue to live while most other ancient civilizations of the world are now found to exist only as old relics of history ? Gandhi and Subhas believed, like other saints and savants of India, that the Indian civilization survived, not because it succeeded in wielding any mighty sword, but because of the spiritual strength that she mustered from the time immemorial. India distinguished herself from other civilizations as she relied on the spiritual values

or her concept of spiritual hamanism as the principal source of evolution of the concepts of all other social and cultural values. The Indian civilization flourished in every aspect of its socio-cultural manifestations but essentially on the recognition of the spiritual value as the seminal inspiration of all its social enrichments.

Gandhi believed that the "essence of the Indian civilization is spiritual." Emphasising the fundamental characteristic of the Indian civilization, he said in his simple words : "Indian civilization represents in its essence the divine force. Modern civilization is materialistic, as ours is chiefly spiritual." It was not that the Indian civilization did not aspire to attain success in the material spheres, but Gandhi pointed out that its concept of material enrichment always remained in tune with its spiritual values or its outlook of spiritual humanism.

Subhas also believed, as firmly as Gandhi, that the elan vital of the civilization of India was its faith in spiritual values. But unlike Gandhi, who was known as a political leader and a moral teacher as well, Subhas did not express his views on matters pertaining to religion or spiritualism as often as the Mahatma. But how deep was his faith in the spiritual values of India is evident from the naming of his autobiography as the *Autobiography of An Indian Pilgrim.* In the last chapter of this unfinished life story of his own, the 'Indian pilgrim' in Subhas explained his philosophical faith affirming his conviction in the essentially spiritual characteristics of the Indian civilization.

Both Gandhi and Subhas believed that it was the faith of the Indian civilization in its spiritual values which gave the strength and vitality to it to withstand many onslaughts, many vicissitudes, and still continues to maintain its living spirit to move with the time. Both of them had been very emphatic to remind their countrymen that, while aspiring to build a modern India in a modern way, they should never forget to follow the heritage of their own culture and civilization. They warned, like Vivekananda, that if India goes the moral way of hedonism of the materialistic civilization of the West or of the communists, ignoring her spiritual heritage, she will perish in no time.

PHILOSOPHY OF SYNTHESIS

The spiritual values of India had in it an inherent urge for eternal freedom—to explore, to know, to expand and to aspire for higher fulfilment. From it evolved a social philosophy—a philosophy of synthesis and harmony—as the guiding principle of the progress of the Indian civilization. It is this philosophy which endowed the people of India with the unique cultural characteristics of liberalism, tolerance, understanding and creative accommodation in regard to their attitude to various social and cultural values of human society—of India and of the greater world.

Subhas pointed out that it was because of this philosophy of synthesis of the Indian people that no outside culture or idea could ever conquer India and wipe out her culture and civilization as it was found to happen in the case of many other countries. How this national philosophy of India enabled her people to either absorb or establish a relation of harmony with the ideas and cultures that came from outside and succeeded in maintaining the essential characteristics of their civilization, Subhas stressed this aspect of the Indian history in his Tokyo speech. He said : "During the last 3,000 years, people have come to India from outside with new ideas and sometimes with new cultures. All these influences, ideas and cultures have been gradually absorbed in the national life of India, so that, in spite of the fact, fundamentally we have the same culture and same civilization as we had several thousand years ago, we have nevertheless changed and moved with the time." These views he emphasised in *The Indian Struggle* as well.

Again, how, because of its faith in spiritual humanism and its national philosophy of synthesis, the Indian civilization evolved an outlook of understanding and harmony in regard to its approach to other religious values—Gandhi emphasised this characteristic of the Indian civilization again and again. He pointed out that in ancient days, religion in India was not specifically definitive—it was known as 'Sanatan Dharma', an eternal and universal religion for all the humanity. It was because of this concept that Indian religion, which was later given the name 'Hindu religion' by foreigners, developed an

outlook of equal respectability for all religions and unlike other religions, it never believed in any kind of cultural conquest or religious proselytization. This was a unique gift of India to the sensitive social culture of the mankind. According to Gandhi, it was because of this catholic outlook of Hindu religion that India did not hesitate to accept the Jews, the Zoroastrians, the Christians and the Muslims as permanent settlers in India much before the entry of Islam and Christianity as political powers. He further said that because of its outlook of spiritual humanism and its concept of universality of spiritual values, "Hinduism is not an exclusive religion. In it there is room for worship of all prophets in the world. Hinduism tells every one to worship God according to his faith or Dharma—so it lives at peace with other religions."

It is for the essential characteristic of spiritual humanism of the Indian civilization and its socio-cultural philosophy of synthesis that Gandhi and Subhas always cherished a kind of solemn admiration for India and her culture and civilization.

INDIAN IDEOLOGY

Gandhi and Subhas were all for evolving a national ideology for the Indian people in accordance with her national heritage. Because of her adherence to the values of spiritual humanism and the philosophy of synthesis, no doctrinal concept of any totalitarian or absolutist socio-political ideology ever developed in India. Gandhi and Subhas were, therefore, opposed to the adoption of any totalitarian or absolutist ideology like Communism, Fascism or any other socio-political thoughts of the kind as the national ideology of the Indian people.

The concepts of ideological mission of both these Indian 'pilgrims' were almost identical. They urged the Indian people to evolve their national ideology on the basis of the recognition of the fundamentals of spiritual humanism of India and her socio-cultural philosophy of synthesis. They urged modern India, further, to build up an egalitarian society of the Indian people based on the harmonious relation between the demand of spirit and the demand of matter and on the

synthesis of the principles of freedom and socio-economic equality. In a nutshell, Gandhi and Subhas hoped to build a new and modern India in an Indian way and under Indian conditions and in keeping with the heritage of the Indian culture and civilization. Indeed, India—her civilization, her culture, her heritage of spiritual humanism, her philosophy of synthesis—had been the springing source of all inspirations of Gandhi and Subhas for conceptualization of the missions of their lives. If the Indian people hope to hail them as the two men of destiny of India, they should also cultivate themselves to adore India as devoutly as these two Indian pilgrims and in the same rhythm of the feeling for their motherland.

CHAPTER 8

Concept of Indian Nationalism

BRITISH rulers, while imposing an imperialist theory of nationalism on the Indian people, argued that India had always been a divided country of different races, regions, religions and languages. They claimed that it was the compulsion of the unitary administration of the British that brought them together to create a sense of unity among the Indian people, which in consequence evolved the political concept of Indian nationalism. As this theory was taught in schools and colleges of the British days, many English-educated Indians, including a number of leaders of the Indian national movement, accepted this theory of Indian unity and Indian nationalism as valid.

Since the infiltration of the Marxian ideology into Indian politics, another theory of Indian nationalism was brought to be introduced in India by the Marxists. According to this theory, Indian people are said to be composed of many racial, regional or religious sub-nations and India represents an example of a multinational nationality. Pandit Nehru, as he wrote in his book, *The Discovery of India*, also subscribed to this Marxist theory about the concept of Indian nationalism.

A third theory about the character of Indian nationalism was articulated by the Muslim League during the later part of the thirties. It said, in justification of its demand for a separate homeland for Indian Muslims, that the Indian people were composed of two religious nations—a Hindu nation and a Muslim nation. Its protagonists demanded division of India to set up Pakistan as the separate homeland of the separate Muslim nation.

Neither Mahatma Gandhi nor Subhas Bose accepted any of these theories of Indian nationalism as justifiable—historically, sociologically or philosophically.

NATIONAL UNITY

Gandhi and Subhas pointed out that a common feeling of unity and oneness developed among the people of Bharat even in ancient times. This emotional feeling of belonging to one another was essentially the gift of the culture and civilization of the land of their birth. The ancient country of Bharat was given the name '*Sindhu*', '*Hindu*', or '*Indos*' by foreigners and later it came to be known as Hindustan—a name given to this country by Muslim rulers—and finally this country was given the name India by Europeans. But whatever might have been the name of this country, the feeling of oneness continued among its people throughout the different periods of its history without any rupture. Gandhi and Subhas were very emphatic in their views that the sense of unity of the Indian people was not the byproduct of the unitary British rule over them, but it was the gift of the ancient history and culture of India.

Both these two leaders of Indian freedom stressed about the characteristics of the feeling of unity among the Indian people from the days of ancient times as a remarkable feature in the history of mankind. Such a sense of unity of the people was not found to exist in any other country of the world of the size of India, except to a certain extent in China. Politically, India was not found to remain united always, but transcending all political divisions of the country, the feeling of oneness among the Indian people and their claim of identifying themselves as Indians of *Bharatiya* or *Hindustani* always remained undisrupted. In racial, linguistic or religious characteristics, India is a country more diverse in nature than Europe. But nothing of the kind of a common feeling of the European culture, the European civilization or a sense of Europeanness developed in Europe as it happened in the case of India. Europe always remained to be known as a continent, whereas India was known in the world as a single country and not as any continent like Europe. Only, in an effort to subvert the growth of the nationalist movement in India, British imperialists began to describe India as a 'sub-continent' since the day of the British-inspired birth of the Muslim League in 1906.

Gandhi and Subhas wholly agreed with the views of many eminent Indian scholars that the concept of Indian unity and Indian nationalism was not, essentially, the outcome of the political contributions of the kings and emperors but of the saints, seers and savants, of the spiritual and religious teachers and of the men of art, literature, music and others of the different spheres of Indian culture. It was due to the gifts of the men of higher spiritual and cultural values that the geophysical awareness about the country of India was transformed into a mystical concept of a spiritual value. The Indian people developed a finer sentiment about their motherland as a sacred *Virat Deha.* Their ancient scriptures conceptualized Mother India as a sacred deity—visualizing seven mountains, seven rivers and seven ancient cities of India—as the organic parts of her indivisible, inviolable and invariable entity. Thus, in the daily prayers of the ancient Indians were introduced the verses like :

Ganga Cha Yamuna Chaiva
Godavari Saraswati !
Narmade Sindhu Kaveri
Jalesmin Sannidhini Kuru !!
or
Ayodhya Mathura Maya Kashi
Kanchi Avantika !
Puri Dwaravati Chaiva
Saptaite Mokhshadyika !!

Sankaracharya, the saint-philosopher, established four principal *Mathas*—Joshi Matha of the Badri-Kedar area, Govardhana Matha of Puri, Sarada Matha of Dwaraka and Sringeri Matha of the South—in the four far-flung points of India. Similarly, fifty-two Shakti Pitasthans were also set up in various parts of India by Indian religious teachers. They urged the Indian people to perform Tirtha Parikrama of all these places as the pre-condition for attaining Moksha. Obviously, by introducing this religious practice of pilgrimages to these holy places, the saints and seers of India hoped to create a sacred feeling of an integral concept of the unity of India as the *Janani Janmabhumi*—whom they asked to adore as superior even to the heaven as '*Swargadapi gariasi*'.

About this spiritual ideas of Indian unity that the ancient saints and savants gave to the Indian people, Gandhi said : "What do you think could have been the intention of those far-seeing ancestors of ours who established Setubandha in South India, Jagannath in the East and Hardwar in the North as places of pilgrimage ? They knew that worship of God could have been performed just as well at home. They taught us that those whose hearts glow with righteousness had the Ganges in their homes. But they saw that India was one undivided land so made by nature. They, therefore, argued that it must be one nation. Arguing thus, they established holy places in various parts of India. And we Indians are one, as no two Englishmen are."

Subhas shared the same view about Indian unity with Gandhi. In fact, the concept of Indian unity and Indian nationalism was an absorbing subject for him. He dealt with the subject in the perspective of a historian though, nevertheless, he represented Gandhian views about the concept of Indian unity almost identically. Subhas wrote in *The Indian Struggle* : "Though geographically, ethnologically and historically India presents an endless diversity to any observer, there is nonetheless a fundamental unity underlying the diversity. That unity transcends the innumerable diversities of blood, colour, language, dress, manner and sect. Geographically, India seems to be cut out from the rest of the world as a self-contained unit. The ethnic diversity of India has never been a problem, for throughout her history she has been able to absorb different races and impose on them a common culture and tradition. The most important factor has been the Hindu religion. North or South, East or West, wherever you may travel, you will find the same religious ideas, the same culture and the same tradition. All Hindus look upon India as the holy land. The sacred rivers like the sacred cities are distributed all over the country. If as a pious Hindu you have to complete your round of pilgrimage, you will have to travel Setubandha-Rameshwar in the extreme South and to Badrinath in the bosom of the snow-clad Himalayas in the North. The great teachers who wanted to convert the country to their faith had always to tour the whole

of India and one of the greatest of them, Sankaracharya, built four Ashramas in the four corners of the country which flourish to this day. Everywhere, the same scriptures are read and followed and the epics, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, are equally popular wherever you may travel."

Then, what happened to this concept of Indian unity when the Mohammedans came to India and settled permanently in this country ? About it, Subhas answered : "With the advent of the Mohammedans, a new synthesis was gradually worked out. Though they did not accept the religion of the Hindus, they made India their home and shared in the common social life of the people—their joys and their sorrows. Through mutual co-operation, a new art and a new culture was evolved which was different from the old but which nevertheless was distinctly Indian. In architecture, painting, music, new creations were made which represented the happy blending of the two." Gandhi also often talked about the synthesis of the religious, cultural and social values of the Hindus and the Muslims and other religious communities of India in his own style, though not in any academic language.

Thus, neither Gandhi nor Subhas accepted the imperialist theory of the British rulers about the growth of Indian unity and the origin of Indian nationalism. They always held the view that the Indian people had their unity and an abiding feeling of Indian-ness or Indian nationalism from ancient times as contributed essentially by their common culture and civilization.

INDIAN NATIONALISM

The modern concept of national unity and nationalism is the gift of the post-Napoleonic politics of Europe. According to this concept, a political state is considered as the mother of a nation, and a nation-state is looked upon as the matrix of modern nationalism. This thinking about national unity and nationalism now dominates political thinkings almost all over the world.

Gandhi and Subhas fought for an independent Indian State as the most vital necessity for the preservation of national unity and flourishing of the aspiration of nationalism

of the Indian people in modern days. However, they urged their countrymen to understand that Indian national unity and nationalism originated in the early days not out of any political compulsion but in the cultural heritage of the Indian civilization. During various periods of the history of India, this country faced political fragmentation many times, but such political divisions could never alienate them from their common Indian identity. The people of India, everywhere, pulsated similarly with the same feeling for their common spiritual, religious, social and cultural values. Wherever they had been in any region of their country, they shared the same sentiment of Indian-ness and Indianism. This was the remarkable phenomenon of the Indian history which was not found in common with the history of other countries of the world.

Gandhi and Subhas urged their countrymen to aspire for their political freedom for establishing an independent State of their own, but they asked them not to forget the historical background of the genesis and the fundamental character of their nationalism. Indian nationalism had always been a cultural concept and the values of Indian culture had unfailingly worked as its binding force. In modern time the compulsion of political unity has been recognized as the unavoidable factor for preserving national unity of every nation, but Gandhi and Subhas urged that the Indian people should never forget the cultural heritage of their national unity. They further urged that, for maintaining a living unity of the Indian people and fulfilling the aspirations of Indian nationalism, the concept of cultural unity should receive equal emphasis along with the necessity of their political unity.

PHILOSOPHY OF SYNTHESIS

The civilization of India conceptualized a unique philosophy—the philosophy of synthesis—as the guiding principle of nationalism of the Indian people. It was because of this philosophy, as Gandhi and Subhas stressed equally, that the Indian civilization succeeded in integrating people belonging to different regions, races and religions and speaking different languages into an indivisible entity of a united nation and

synthesise different cultures and social values into an organic concept of a harmonious Indian culture. Its internal socio-cultural diversities could be easily harmonized, as this philosophy of synthesis of the Indian nation enabled it either to absorb or establish a relation of synthesis and harmony with the *Sakas*, the *Huns* and the people of Islamic faith who invaded and settled in India, accepting this country as their permanent homeland. As the British invaders never accepted India as their own homeland, they always remained separated from the national community of the Indian people, as Subhas pointed out : "The British people, unlike the invaders of old, did not make India their home."

Gandhi always pointed out that although the Hindus constituted the biggest quantum of the Indian people, the concept of Indian nation and its nationalism, in no time of the history of India, was identified with the Hindu community or the Hindu religion. The Indian nation included in its fold all religious and racial communities, but its concept—a cultural concept—transcended all such diverse identities of race or religion. Subhas also in his ideas and actions never identified Indian nation with any religious community or equated Indian nationalism with the sectional feeling of any such community.

About his concept of Indian nationality, Gandhi said : "India cannot cease to be one nation because people belonging to different religions live in it. The introduction of foreigners does not necessarily destroy a nation; they merge in it. A country is one nation only when such a condition obtains in it. That country must have a faculty for assimilation. India has ever been such a country. In reality, there are as many religions as there are individuals; but those who are conscious of the spirit of nationality do not interfere with one another's religion...In no part of the world are one nationality and one religion synonymous terms; nor has it ever been so in India... Our common allegiance and reverence must be our motherland...Hindustan belongs to all those who are born and bred here and who have no other country to look to. Therefore, it belongs to Parsis, to Beni Israels, to Indian Christians, to Muslims and other non-Hindus as much as to Hindus. Free

India will be no Hindu Raj; it will be Indian Raj."

Echoing the same concept of Indian nationalism, Subhas said many times earlier and again in his Tokyo speech : "Free India must have an absolutely neutral and impartial attitude towards all religions."

This concept of Indian nationalism, as commonly adhered to by Gandhi and Subhas, has been put precisely in historical perspective by Dr. R.K. Mukherjee in his book, *The Fundamental Unity of India*. He wrote : "The term India itself points to the national historical fact that it denotes the land of the Hindus. The oldest foreign reference to India occurs in the Persian inscriptions of Darius (521—585 B.C.) in the form Hindu which is equivalent to the word Sindhu in Old Persian. The Greeks dropped the hard aspirate and coined the soft word Indos whence India. The term India therefore, stands literally for Hindustan, while the term Hindu historically speaking, has a territorial or geographical significance and should not bear any religious connotation. The people of India were not defined in history by religion but by their country like the peoples of most other countries of the world."

As Indian nationalism was never identified with any religion, region or race, neither Gandhi nor Subhas could accept the two-nation theory of Jinnah, which claimed that the Hindus and the Muslims were two separate nations. They could not accept the other theory as well that the Indians constituted a multinational nationality. Nehru or the Communists believed that people of different races or regions or religions belonged to different sub-nations and these sub-nations, as found in Russia, comprised Indian nationality. The Marxian exponents of this theory missed to take into consideration the spiritual and cultural background of Indian nationalism and its philosophy of synthesis which succeeded in integrating the people belonging to various races, regions and religions into an integral concept of an organic whole of an Indian nation.

ACT OF SACRILEGE

Both the Mahatma and the revolutionary pilgrim of Indian freedom looked upon India as their 'divine motherland'. India, Indian nationalism and its national unity were inseparable and

inviolable concepts with them. Gandhi and Subhas were two true Indians and Indian nationalism was a kind of political religion with them. In Indian nationalism and its philosophy they found the fount of their personal values and all the basic views about their concepts of socio-political ideology. In Indian nationalism they discovered an outlook of universalism. In it they found a unique urge for understanding the creative spirit of harmony of various values. Both of them believed that Indian nationalism was a gift of the Indian civilization not for the Indian people alone, but it had also a message to deliver to the humanity at large. The philosophy of synthesis of Indian nationalism was looked upon by both of them as an invaluable concept for resolving ideological conflicts of the present-day world. The very idea of division of their divine motherland was, therefore, extremely shocking to them.

Even during the days of the Pathan and Mughal rule, there were no records of Hindu-Muslim riots at the grassroots level of the people. Some of the Muslim rulers, no doubt, tried to impose the Islamic concept of theocracy over the Indian people, but such attempts failed to kill the spirit of synthesis of the Indian civilization. Indeed, in the alchemy of the Indian civilization the fundamentalist Islamic concepts radically changed and a broad synthesis of the values of Islam with the values of India emerged in various socio-cultural spheres. It was a kind of a unique triumph for the Indian civilization and its philosophy of synthesis that the Muslims of India themselves quite emotionally advanced the ideas of Hindustan and Hindustani nation and harmonized themselves with the Hindustani culture. In their broad social milieu, the masses of the Hindus and the masses of the Muslims even arrived at broad synthesis of their religious values. The religious diversity of the Hindus and the Muslims presented no insurmountable communal or political problems even during the British days till the movement of Indian freedom gathered a positive momentum after the Bengal Anti-Partition Agitation of 1905.

Since 1906, when some British-inspired reactionary Muslims formed the Muslim League, the imperialist rulers invented a sub-continental character of India and began to instigate and encourage communal conflicts between the Hindus and the

Muslims and these conflicts grew in volume and intensity with the growing momentum of the independence movement. Till a few years before partition, most of the reputed Muslim theologians and scholars were mostly with the Congress, at least not with the Muslim League. Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, a saintly Muslim and founder of the Khuda-e-Khidmatgar movement, and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, one of the internationally recognized authority of Islamic theology, were the two principal pillars of the Indian National Congress. Nevertheless, the leadership of the communal agitation of the Muslims, with the deliberate backing of the British Government, went over to men like Jinnah and others who never practised Islam in their personal lives nor had they even an elementary knowledge about the theology of Islam.

With the rise of the Gandhian leadership in the Congress, the freedom movement assumed a new character and an accelerated speed and along with it was also accentuated the agitation of the politically instigated Muslim communalism. Gandhi attempted to tackle this problem in two ways—by preaching the gospel of religious harmony in his daily prayer meetings and by making concessions and compromises with the demands of the Muslim communalists. However, his prayer meetings were decried by the League as anti-Islamic although men like Badshah Khan and Maulana Azad found nothing wrong to attend such prayer meetings. The politics of concessions to the demands of the Muslim League only made it more insatiable and more intransigent in its communal demands, ultimately leading to the demand of partition of India for setting up a "separate homeland for the Muslim nation of the sub-continent of India."

Subhas had been equally emphatic like Gandhi about the necessity of Hindu-Muslim unity, but he believed that it could never be politically achieved until the Britishers were ousted from India. He, therefore, said, quite outspokenly : "The all-party idea is a false and dangerous idea. The party that is solely responsible for producing the constitution (of free India)." He further stressed : "The Congress should only care for an agreement between nationalist Hindus and nationalist Muslims. Subhas made these observations at the time of the Round Table Conference (1931) in which Mahatma Gandhi participated

as the sole spokesman of the Indian National Congress along with the host of representatives of the Muslim League and other reactionary forces, who never asked or fought for Indian freedom at any time.

In 1938, two years before the Muslim League demanded partition of India for establishing Pakistan, Subhas prophetically warned the Congress leadership about the British design to divide India. He said in his Haripura Congress address : "I have no doubt that British ingenuity will seek some constitutional device for partitioning India and thereby neutralizing the transfer of power." In the late thirties or early forties, Gandhi or Nehru did not view the demand of Pakistan as seriously as Subhas. Subhas again warned the Congress leaders from Berlin in 1942 about the British conspiracy to divide India. He said, after an analysis of the 'divide and rule' policy of the British : "Having themselves invented the theory of Pakistan—or the plan for dividing India—the British have been doing colossal, but skilful, propaganda in support of it." He further said : "Pakistan'—the idea...to divide India in a so-called Hindu India and a so-called Muslim India—is a fantastic plan...First, India is geographically and historically an indivisible unit. Secondly, in most parts of India, Hindus and Muslims are so mixed up that it is not possible to separate them. Thirdly, if Muslim states are forcibly set up, new minority problems would be created in these states which will present new difficulties. Fourthly, the unity of the Hindus and the Muslims is possible only on the basis of a free and undivided India." He could hardly believe that the Congress could agree to divide India and he, therefore, thought : "An independent Pakistan is an impossibility."

Gandhi also believed that Pakistan is an impossibility. However, the Mahatma did not know till 1946 how his strategy of 'peaceful negotiations' with the British—accepting their arbitration on the issue of India's independence—could be used as an imperialist machination to divide India and impose Pakistan. Gandhi was led to the first leg of the trap by Rajagopalachari, who resigned from the Congress in 1942 because he could not support the Quit India Movement. Rajaji, who had already along with the Indian Communists lent his support to the

demand of Pakistan, induced Gandhi to enter into a dialogue with Jinnah on the issue of the merits of the Pakistani plan. The polemics between the Mahatma and the legal wizard Muhammad Ali Jinnah continued for many days, with an exchange of written notes between the two about the contents of their talk. Gandhi asked Jinnah : "My eldest son embraced Islam; does it mean that it changed his nationality ?" Jinnah had no convincing answer and, thus, Gandhi knocked out Jinnah's two-nation theory at its very roots. Jinnah himself did the same thing later when on the very day of the inauguration of Pakistan he said : "We are starting with this fundamental principle that we are all equal citizens of one state. We shall keep this in front of us as our ideal and you will find that in course of time Hindus will cease to be Hindus and Muslims will cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense because that is the personal faith of each individual but in the political sense as the citizens of the nation." Nobody could refute the two-nation theory, the very basis of the justification of the birth of Pakistan, in a better way than Jinnah did it himself. But, still, this Pakistan plan, which was initially described by Sir Zaffrullah Khan as a 'political chimera' was worked out by the British to deal a fatal blow to the cultural heritage of Indian nationalism and Indian national unity.

The first concrete proposal in support of Pakistan came in the shape of the Wavell offer in September 1944. Netaji immediately went over Azad Hind Radio at Rangoon to denounce it. In an impassionate broadcast he told his countrymen : "We have resolved to create a united and free India. Therefore, we shall oppose all attempts to divide her and cut her up into bits. Ireland and Palestine have taught us a lesson. America could not have risen to her greatness had the American Pakistanists been allowed their way. We can easily solve our minority problems once we are free from foreign domination...I am sure even if Pakistan is conceded, it will not solve our problem." Then warning Congressmen not "to compromise with Britain...to swallow the bitter pill of Pakistan", he said "if India is divided she will be ruined economically, politically and culturally." Then he asked the millions of Muslim young men in India : "Will you be a party to the vivisection of your

motherland ? What will be your status in divided India ? My friends, if you want freedom, you must fight for it and kick the British out. There should be no compromise with Britain...I vehemently oppose the Pakistani scheme for the vivisection of our motherland...Our divine motherland shall not be cut up !"

Gandhi met Lord Wavell and rejected his offer. In those days, Gandhi was known in his inner circles to take a keen interest in the activities of Subhas fighting along the Imphal front. The escape of Subhas profoundly influenced the non-violent Gandhi in taking his decision to wage an 'open rebellion' against the British in 1942. Was it again that he rejected the Wavell offer because Subhas was fighting for national liberation along the eastern frontier of India ?

Subhas heartily congratulated Gandhi for rejecting the Wavell offer. A month before the fall of Japan, he again thanked Gandhi for not allowing Congress leaders to join the Interim Government of Wavell. This was his last major broadcast in which he expressed his hope that Gandhi will save India from the harakiri of partition.

None in the Congress ever expected to agree upon partitioning India and accept the Pakistan plan. Rajagopalachari, who advocated it since 1942, was already out of the Congress. The Communist Party began to support the Pakistani scheme of the Muslim League but its voice then had little effect in Indian politics. However, the attitude of Nehru and Patel began to undergo a surprising change after they entered into the Interim Government of Wavell, though the Congress as a whole still continued to resist the move for partition.

Mountbatten replaced Wavell on March 22, 1947. He began to move in an extraordinary haste to finalize the plan of the transfer of power to Indians. Within two weeks of his arrival in India, he was happy to find that the Interim Government of Wavell played the decisive trick to change the views of Nehru and Patel. He found that these two topmost leaders of the Congress had already got the taste of power and were feeling tired to go to prison any more (Nehru himself told about it to his biographer Michael Brecher). Liaquat Ali's budget played the last trick. The monarchical Viceroy displayed

an extraordinary skill of imperialist intrigues to extract the approval of Nehru and Patel for the partition of India and the establishment of a separate state of Pakistan. Everything else Mountbatten did after he got the consent of the Congress to his plan, he did it at a breakneck speed to finalize the plan of the division of India, when he found that both Nehru and Jinnah agreed to remain in the British Commonwealth.

Gandhi was then in Noakhali engaged in his mission of restoration of Hindu-Muslim harmony. He knew nothing about the acceptance of the Pakistani scheme by Nehru, Patel and other Congress leaders. This was the first and the most fateful decision that was ever taken by Nehru and Patel without consulting Gandhi. As soon as he got the news, he rushed to Delhi to meet Mountbatten, but it was too late for him. He found that Mountbatten had already won over Gandhi's Congress to his side, and he had been reduced to nothing but to the status of a 'forsaken, forgotten, forlorn fakir.'

Gandhi opposed the partition of India all along. He called it to be as fatal as 'vivisection of his body'. He made two last desperate attempts to save the national unity of India. Gandhi threatened the Congress Working Committee : "If the Congress wishes to accept partition, it will be over my dead body." The Mahatma then hardly realised that Gandhi meant little, any more, to Nehru and Patel. In spite of Gandhi they agreed to accept the Mountbatten plan of partition and Pakistan.

Gandhi made a last-minute, frantic effort to save Indian unity. Mountbatten was to announce his plan on June 3, 1947. On June 2, the apostle of non-violence declared in a sharply un-Gandhian voice in his prayer meeting : "Let the whole nation be in flames : we will not concede one inch to Pakistan."

But Gandhi soon discovered that his days were gone. He realised tragically and too late that neither Nehru nor Patel really believed in non-violence, nor had they any fundamental faith in the heritage of the Indian culture and civilization or in the philosophy of Indian nationalism. In 1942, when Gandhi decided to go alone for the Quit India Movement, in spite of opposition by Nehru and Rajaji, he had, then, Patel, Rajendra

Prasad and Kripalani with him, but now he found himself forsaken by all. He had none to support him.

But what happened to Gandhi in the final moment of decision ? He did something unbelievably strange—the last strangest act of his life. He asked the historic AICC meeting of June 15, 1947, to support the Working Committee's resolution on the acceptance of partition of India and Pakistan.

But the same Gandhi again refused to welcome the divided independence on the day of its inauguration on August 15, 1947. He kept away from the 15th August ceremony at Delhi and the Father of the Nation declined to send any message to greet the occasion, of the emergence of the divided nation of divided India. Indeed, on that day the Mahatma felt that he was alone, absolutely alone—only a lonely fakir. He was then longing, as he told Sarat Bose, for another lonely pilgrim lost in the unknown.

Finally, the greatest man of India—the Mahatma of the Indian people—became the object of tragic sacrifice for the misconceived and miscalculated politics of Nehru and Patel.

NATIONAL UNITY

In the days after the war, the image of Subhas almost captivated the emotion of Gandhi. He realised what he could not do, Subhas did achieve it. Subhas achieved it to set up a splendid record of Indian national unity.

The Indian Muslims, except the Frontier Pathan, realised that Gandhi was their friend only after his martyrdom for their cause. But Subhas had always the goodwill of the Indian Muslims, and after the Azad Hind revolution he came to be adored by the Indian Muslims everywhere. Hasan Shahid Suhrawardy, Fazlul Huq, Akram Khan and many other distinguished leaders of the Muslim League publicly said that only 'Subhas Babu' could save the unity of India and could he come back to India after the war there would not have been any partition of India." Interestingly, when as the president of the Haripura Congress, Subhas had dialogues with Jinnah on Hindu-Muslim issues, the Quid-e-Azam of the Muslim community told the Congress president : "You are the disciple of my friend C.R. Das. I can come to terms with you. But you

are not the leader of the Congress; the leader is Gandhi." Jinnah's personal hostility towards Gandhi was well known.

Subhas always believed that Hindu-Muslim unity and the unity of all the Indians could be achieved only in the absence of the British. He proved it spectacularly under the regime of the Azad Hind Governnment in South-East Asia. As the Netaji of the Azad Hind revolution, he succeeded in consolidating ail Indians under the banner of the Provisional Government of Free India and within the organizational pull of the Indian National Army and the Indian Independence League. He established it on the basis of a common faith—transcending all barriers of race, region, religion or language—that all Indians constituted an indivisible nation. Indeed, Subhas created a saga in the fulfilment of the ideals of Indian nationalism and national unity in leading his Azad Hind revolution of Indian national liberation. He took revolutionary steps in organizing the Azad Hind Fauj as a real national army. Breaking the divisive traditions of the British Indian Army, he inspired Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians, men and officers of his army to live together in the same barracks and dine together the same food sitting together around the same dining table. A majority of the INA men were Hindus, but most of its senior officers were Muslims and most of them were those Muslims who came from the region which is now called Pakistan. The first two INA divisions were led by two Muslim generals—Maj. Gen. M.Z. Kiani and Maj. Gen. Aziz Ahmed —who hailed from West Punjab. There was no question of communal equation or communal identity in the Azad Hind Fauj or the Government. The first flag of Indian freedom was hoisted in the liberated area of Manipur by a Punjabi Muslim —Col. Shaukatullah Malek. Indeed, Muslim generals and civilian administrators held most of the key posts in the Azad Hind Fauj, in the War Council and in the Azad Hind Government. The men and officers of the INA—Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians—were known to fight together for their national liberation and shed their blood together for attaining the same glory of similar martyrdom. In his 3-month submarine journey from Germany to Sumatra, only one Muslim INA man—Major Abid Hasan—accompanied Netaji. Again,

the man who could say the last word about the fate of Netaji was also a Muslim—Col. Habibur Rahman. In the course of the Azad Hind war of national liberation, none felt whether he was a Hindu or a Muslim or a Sikh or a Christian, everyone believed and acted as an Indian only.

In social, cultural and religious spheres also, the achievements of the Azad Hind revolution were memorable. Every Indian used to greet the other with 'Jai Hind' and their ceremonial dresses were also the same. There were no caste or religious distinctions in any of the organisations of the Azad Hind Government. Netaji achieved something very daring when he succeeded in opening the doors of the Hindu temples, Muslim mosques, Sikh gurdwaras, Budhist pagodas and Christian churches to all Indians, irrespective of the identities of their caste, creed or religion. Indeed, besides the records of political glories and military exploits, the Azad Hind movement achieved a kind of an unprecedented socio-cultural revolution among the Indians of all the communities and castes in South-East Asia.

GANDHI'S TRIBUTES

The saga of national unity, as created by Subhas, almost hypnotized Gandhi. He missed no opportunity to extol the achievements of national unity by Netaji and his INA. In the image of the INA, he appreciatively found the scintillating reflections of his own cherished ideal of Indian nationalism and national unity. In one of his glowing tributes to Subhas, Gandhi said : "The greatest lesson that we can draw from Netaji's life is the way in which he infused the spirit of unity amongst his men so that they could rise above all religious and provincial barriers and shed together their blood for the common cause. His unique achievement would surely immortalize him in the pages of history. Everyone of Netaji's followers who saw me on their return to India had said to me without exception that Netaji's influence acted like a charm on them and they had acted under him with the single aim of achieving Indian freedom. The question of religious and provincial or any such difference had never cropped in their minds at all.

"The greatest and the lasting act of Netaji was that he abolished all distinctions of caste and class. He was not a mere Bengali. He never thought himself to be a caste Hindu. He was Indian first and Indian last. What more, he fired all under him. . . . to gather together, under one banner, men from all religions and races of India, and to infuse into them the spirit of solidarity and oneness to the exclusion of all communal or parochial sentiments. It is an example which we should emulate."

The Mahatma paid his last tribute in his last public speech to Netaji, only seven days before his martyrdom for upholding the ideal of Indian nationalism. He extolled the saga of national unity achieved by Subhas in terms of highest appreciation. The Father of the Nation urged his countrymen to emulate the ideal of Indian nationalism as had been enshrined by Netaji in the history of his Azad Hind revolution. [Gandhiji's speech quoted].

What had been the response of the Nehru Government to the Mahatma's last testament on national unity ? Nehru and Patel, along with Jinnah, were the "guilty men of partition" who crippled the heritage of cultural nationalism of India and disastrously disrupted national unity to dismember the ancient land of India. After the partition, Nehru wailed interminably after being baffled to face the new ghost of communalism found rampant everywhere in India and Pakistan. He went on talking ceaselessly about communal unity and national integration. But he never,—not even for once—tried to project the image of Netaji and the INA as the noblest emblem of the ideal of Indian nationalism and national unity. He totally forgot all about the saga of national unity as was created by Netaji and the INA. He said nothing or did nothing to urge the Indian people to emulate the ideal of nationalism of Netaji. But the greatest man of India—the Mahatma—acknowledged unreservedly that what he failed to achieve Netaji achieved that splendidly in giving a living reality to the concept of Indian nationalism. But neither Nehru nor any government after him ever made any use of the great legacy of Indian nationalism of the Azad Hind revolution for inspiring the Indian people towards fulfilling the objective of Indian

national unity. The people of Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram were participants in the Azad Hind war and had developed great love and admiration for Netaji, but neither Nehru nor any other Prime Minister of India ever recalled Netaji and the INA when they visited these areas. The 'man of destiny' of India who embodied the spirit of Indian nationalism and national unity, transcending all barriers of race, region, religion, caste or language, into a concept of a tangible reality, remains forgotten even now. Nothing positive has been done to project the image of Netaji as the symbol of the ideal of Indian nationalism and national unity.

INDIAN HERITAGE

Both the Mahatma and the Netaji of the Indian people valued nationalism as vital as their life-breath. The concept of Indian nationalism, they believed, was inviolably related to the heritage of Indian culture and civilization. They never looked upon India as a mere country—she was to them an emblem of the ancient values of Indian nationalism. The proposal for the partition of India terribly shocked Subhas and, when it was actually worked out, its effect was disastrous on Gandhi. The meaning of partition was not a mere political division of India to them—it was in reality the vivisection of the living spiritual and socio-cultural unity of the ancient land of India, the effect of which, they felt, was bound to be cataclysmically far-reaching. They opposed partition, because they could see that partition will spell disaster for both the divided countries, and it will set a process of endless actions and reactions imperilling the future of both.

After the partition, Gandhi announced to shift his Ashram from Wardha to Noakhali in the former East Pakistan and settle there for the rest of his life, hoping to work for the harmony among the Hindus and the Muslims. Perhaps, the Mahatma hoped that Subhas will return in the near future to help him to salvage the doomed destiny of divided India. He thought that by settling down in a village of Noakhali he will succeed in restoring the broken cultural nexus of historic India, which was more important to him than the divided political set-up of the two divided countries. But this decision of

Gandhi suffered an initial setback due to the Congress-League decision to exchange Government officers on the basis of their religious identities. His resolve suffered further and terribly when, after the post-partition communal holocausts, the Hindu-Sikh minorities migrated wholesale to India from West Punjab, Baluchistan and the Frontier Province and the Muslim minorities of East Punjab also left for West Pakistan. Terrified Hindus of Sindh and East Bengal and the Muslims of northern India had yet to know what awaited their fate. Gandhi was still hoping against hope to reverse the avalanches of the cross-wise migrations of the minorities from Pakistan and India. Gandhi wanted to make a beginning to work out his idea by sending 50,000 Hindus and Sikhs back to their homes in West Pakistan and re-rehabilitating an equal number of migrated Muslims in East Punjab. Jinnah also agreed to Gandhi's plan. On the advice of Gandhi, a popular *Phir Basao* (re-rehabilitation) movement was started. In January 1948, two emissaries of Gandhi, Dr. Dinshaw Mehta and Dr. Sushila Nayar, were sent by Gandhi to Karachi to finalise this plan in consultation with Jinnah. But a bullet of the assassin shattered the last dream of the Mahatma. With him was gone the last hope of restoration of the broken bond of the socio-cultural heritage of the divided people of India—at least for the present phase of the history of the country which is now called a sub-continent.

The tragic end of the struggle for Indian freedom showed that Patel had no vision to foresee the disastrous consequences of the partition of India. He had no historical, philosophical or ideological mind. He was only an outstanding political organiser. Though Nehru was brilliant in many ways, he had the proclivity to wobble in his own subjectivism in moments of critical decisions for the nation and then remorsefully relapsing in to waiting for his past mistakes. Seeing the communally seismic consequences of partition and the rise of Islamic theocracy in Pakistan, an inevitable outcome of the concept of Muslim nationality of Pakistan, Nehru publicly regretted the decision of partition. In his guilty conscience, he discovered a recipe—a political philosophy of secularism—to save India from the infection of the theocratic politics of Pakistan.

DOCTRINE OF SECULARISM

After the assassination of Gandhi and the death of Patel, Nehru introduced the doctrine of secularism in India, which has now practically replaced the ideal of nationalism. Gandhi or Subhas never used the word secularism to express their ideas about the political doctrine of free India, particularly in regard to their emphasis on religious freedom of all communities of the Indian people. As a believer in the philosophy of synthesis of Indian nationalism, the Mahatma always explained the concept of Indian nationality on the basis of the heritage of Indian culture and civilization. In a nutshell, he said : "I do not expect India of my dream to develop one religion, that is to be wholly Hindu or wholly Christian or wholly Mussalman, but I want to be wholly tolerant with its religions working side by side with one another...Religion is no test of nationality but a personal matter between him and his God. In the sense of nationality, they are Indians first and Indians last, no matter what religion they profess...Free India will not be a Hindu raj, it will be Indian Raj, based not on the majority of any religious sector or community but as the representatives of the whole people without distinction of religion."

Subhas also had identical views, which he repeated many times and acted on the basis of these principles of Indian nationalism when he headed the first sovereign state of the Indian people—The Provisional Government of Free India. He enunciated the policy of free India earlier as well when he said in 1938 in his Haripura Congress address: "The state shall observe neutrality in regard to all religions. Every citizen shall enjoy freedom of conscience and the right to freely profess and practise his religion, subject to public order and morality."

The Indian culture and civilization is essentially spiritual in outlook, but it never identified its heritage with any particular institution of religion—far less it developed any concept of theocratic statehood. Emperor Ashok introduced Dharma Chakra, which Nehru reintroduced as the symbol of free India as it emerged after partition; but the great ancient builder of united India never viewed the principles of his statehood akin to any concept of Christian or Islamic theocracy as developed in later days. In the middle ages, some Muslim rulers of India

attempted to impose a kind of Islamic theocracy on the Indian people, but such attempts ultimately failed to subvert the ancient ideals of Indian nationalism and the heritage of synthesis of the Indian culture and civilization. Analysing the characteristics of the history of evolution of the concept of Indian statehood, Subhas wrote in *The Indian Struggle* : "In India, there being no association between the church (religious institution) and the state...anti-religious and atheist feeling... has not grown."

The concept of theocratic politics is alien to the culture and civilization of India and, obversely again, the idea of secularism is also alien to its heritage of spiritual humanism. Etymologically, secularism is a negative, atheistic and amoral concept, whereas the Indian outlook of culture is essentially spiritualistic, but not institutionally religious. Historically, philosophically and doctrinally, secularism is not only irrelevant and repugnant to the concept of the cultural values of India but it is also contrary to the ideal of Indian nationalism. If by secularism is meant to keep the state free from any religious identity, it is already there in the history and the philosophy of synthesis of Indian nationalism. It only requires now, after partition, to re-emphasise the basic ideals of Indian nationalism for the people of India to follow in a spirit of renewed pledge.

As the logical consequence of the religious division of India, the politics of Islamic theocracy has come to dominate the ideological outlook of the State of Pakistan. The recent rise of the movement of Islamic fundamentalism in many Muslim countries of the Middle East, including the neighbouring state of Pakistan, is likely to set an adverse reaction in India. But its probable effect can be countered not in a negative way by politically emphasising the essentially atheist, amoral and a spiritual outlook of secularism, but by positively projecting the ideals of socio-cultural synthesis of Indian nationalism. An overemphasis on secularism by the state and the political parties will only help to generate a materialist milieu in India in denial of the importance of the spiritually inspired cultural and social values of the Indians, helping, thereby, to create a political climate in India for a convenient growth of the

atheist and amorally materialist ideology of communism.

After the partition, a deplorable tendency has developed in Indian politics to substitute the ideals of Indian nationalism by the political cliche of secularism. Nationalism was considered as the most potent force to vitalize the spirit behind the freedom struggle but after attaining freedom the Indian constitution has dropped the ideal of nationalism. Queerly, even those Indian political parties which do not profess the Marxian metaphysics of materialism or allegiance to international communism, have also dropped the ideal of nationalism from the objective principles of their party constitutions. Every political party in India now stands for the principles of secularism, socialism and democracy. And in the constitution of no nationally recognized party in India, the principle of nationalism is now found to be incorporated, although all parties are now crying hoarse for the national integration of the Indian people. It is no wonder that the spirit of Indian nationalism and national unity is now increasingly missing from among the Indian people.

The Mahatma and the Netaji of the Indian people were above all and everything two true Indians and two true nationalists. Indian nationalism was the principal source of all their ideological inspirations. In the philosophy of synthesis of Indian nationalism, they found the highest good or the highest virtues to fulfil the mission of Indian civilization. Indeed, these two pilgrims of Indian freedom were the missionaries of Indian nationalism who urged the Indian people to develop a deep sense of commitment to Indian values and Indian ness. If the Indian people aspire to follow the heritage of the ideals of Gandhi and Subhas, the two co-architects of their freedom, they should adopt Indian nationalism as the fundamental principle of their national ideology and evolve their concept of socialism or sarvodaya and democratic freedom on the edifice of this basic ideal.

CHAPTER 9

The Vision of Sarvodaya and Samyavad

SARVODAYA was the highest concept of the ideological mission of Gandhi, and for Subhas, it was Samyavad. In mid-forties, Gandhi often described his ideological thinking as 'non-violent socialism'. Subhas, from the very beginning, categorically defined his socialist ideas as 'Indian socialism'.

Since the introduction of his Constructive Programme as the programme of day-to-day activities for Congressmen, Gandhi never talked in terms of any ideology, but mainly about the socio-economic reforms that he highlighted in the items of his constructive works. His emphasis was on the development of Charkha and the Khadi economy, revival of cottage industries, protection of cows, removal of untouchability and upliftment of the Harijans, communal unity, evolving of Hindustani (an amalgam of Hindi and Urdu) as the national language of India, innovation of Nai Talim or basic education and similar other works related to economic and social reforms. He was overtly opposed to the adoption of 'machine' and introduction of industrialization in the Indian economy. He broadly propagated his ideas of Ram Rajya and Gram Swaraj as his model of new society that he hoped to set up in free India. All these ideas of Gandhi appeared as patently reformist, for which Acharya Kripalani, one of the most eminent analysts of Gandhian thoughts in the thirties, candidly described Gandhi as a '*practical reformist*' in his book, *The Gandhian Way*, the preface of which was written by Gandhi himself.

The younger leaders in the Congress, like Nehru, Subhas and later Jayprakash and other socialists, who were then known as either leftists or progressives, appreciated the importance of the Constructive Programme of Gandhi.

Nevertheless, they were not wholly satisfied with his reformist profile. They warmly admired Gandhi for his unique role as the leader of the Indian freedom movement who remarkably succeeded to combine the programme of continuous socio-economic reforms with his political programme of agitation and mass movement for achieving independence. But still, they felt, in those days, that kind of a mission of a revolutionary ideology, that was needed to galvanize the younger elements in the country was missing in the thinking of Gandhi, although they acknowledged his position as that of the supreme leader of the Indian national movement.

CRITICISM BY SUBHAS

Since the Russian Revolution, the question of having a socio-political ideology to motivate all national activities became a vital issue in the politics of every advanced country of the world and more particularly for the people, like the Indians, who were fighting for the liberation of their countries from the subjugation of the Western imperialists. The younger elements inside the Congress felt further agitated over the issue of a socio-political ideology in the late twenties, because it was then seen that the Communist ideology had already made a beginning to infiltrate into the nationalist politics of India. In such a situation, the leftist leaders of the Congress were visibly impelled in search of an ideology—a revolutionary ideology—which could combine the objective of Indian freedom with an ideal of socio-economic emancipation of the Indian people. In those days, Nehru and Subhas, and later Narendra Dev and Jayaprakash spearheaded this move and in it they were found to be explicitly critical about the socio-economic outlook of Gandhi, which was then broadly called 'Gandhism'. The birth of the Congress Socialist Party in 1934 was the positive outcome of this critical attitude of the leftists towards Gandhism.

While in exile in Europe, Subhas turned to be a strident critic of the Gandhian leadership and his socio-economic thinking, particularly after the failure of the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930. He published *The Indian Struggle* in early 1935, in which he was found to make rather very

critical evaluation of the 'role of the Mahatma'. Although it came from the pen of Subhas, yet in its essence it reflected the views of all the leftists and the socialists of those days inside the Congress. In his quest for a revolutionary ideology aiming at achieving national emancipation to be followed by a programme of national reconstruction in free India, as an alternative to the Communist ideology, Subhas wrote : "It has been urged sometimes that Gandhism is an alternative to Communism. This idea is erroneous. Mahatma Gandhi has given the country, and may be the world, a new method—the method of passive resistance or satyagraha or non-violent non-co-operation. He has not given his country or humanity a new programme of social reconstruction as Communism has and the alternative to Communism can be only another theory of social reconstruction." Subhas added further : "His programme is one of reform—he is fundamentally a reformist and not a revolutionary. . . .The future of India lies with a party with a clear ideology, programme and plan of action".

This ideology, as Subhas visualised then, was described by him as Indian socialism or Bharatiya Samyavad. In his book, he outlined the programme of a party, called Bharatiya Samyavadi Sangh, which he hoped to form in India after he returned to the country from his exile in Europe. His 10-point programme stated :

The party will stand for the interests of the masses, i.e., of the peasants, workers, etc., and not for the vested interests, i.e., the landlords, capitalists and money-lending classes;

it will stand for complete political and economic liberation of the Indian people;

it will stand for a federal government as the ultimate goal, but will believe in a strong Central Government with dictatorial powers for some years to come in order to put the country on her feet;

it will believe in the sound system of state planning for reorganising the agricultural and industrial life of the country;

it will seek to build a new social structure on the basis of village communities of the past that were ruled by the village 'Panch' and will strive to break down the existing social

barriers like caste;

it will seek to establish a new monetary and credit system in the light of the theories and experiments that have been and are current in the modern world;

it will seek to abolish landlordism and introduce a uniform land-tenure system for the whole of India; and

it will not stand for a democracy in the mid-Victorian sense of the term, but will believe in a government by a strong party bound together by military discipline, as the only means of holding Indians together and preventing chaos, when Indians are free and thrown entirely on their own resources.

The other two points concerned the technique and strategy of the freedom struggle.

Subhas reached India in 1936 after violating the British ban against his entry into his own country and was imprisoned. He was freed from detention in early 1937, when he was elected president of the Haripura Congress. After about six years in prison and exile, when he got the opportunity to resume his activities in India, he found that a leftist party, called the Congress Socialist Party, had already been formed. He, therefore, preferred to give a trial to this new party, instead of forming another leftist party like the Samyavadi Sangh of his vision. About this newly formed socialist party, he had some inhibitions regarding "the composition of the party and some of its ideas", although he hoped that "out of this left-wing revolt there will ultimately emerge a new full-fledged party with a clear ideology, a programme and a plan of action." However, his expectations in the Congress Socialist Party were belied because of the overwhelming influence of Gandhi and Nehru on its leadership.

Subhas had to form a party of his own in 1939, called the Forward Bloc—principally for promoting India's final struggle for national liberation.

GANDHIAN THINKING

Except his all-out emphasis on the principle of non-violence, Gandhi never showed any doctrinarian attitude towards the question of a socio-political ideology. Gandhi was more particular in implementing his Constructive Programme

than talking about the ideological theories of Socialism or Communism in the twenties and thirties. But it missed the attention of many leftists then that the Gandhian Constructive Programme was not merely the programme of a kind of a humanitarian move to simply ameliorate the social and economic conditions of the poor and the lowly, but this programme had some fundamental objectives behind its concept, the implications of which came to be understood in the late forties only.

Before the mid-forties, Gandhi showed an unmistakable attitude of indifference to the socialist thinking. He did not utter a word in appreciation of socialist ideas—on the contrary, he talked against the capitalist and the socialist or the communist theories of mass production by machine and large-scale industrialization. He stood unyielding in favour of the Khadi economy and the revival of cottage industries. He gave out his views about trusteeship, without clearly explaining then what he really meant by it—thus, creating an impression as if he wanted to compromise with the system of capitalist ownership. Gandhi was also known to oppose the idea of economic planning, when Subhas moved as the president of the Haripura Congress, to set up the first National Planning Committee of India. It was one of the major reasons why Gandhi declined to renominate Subhas as the president of the Tripuri Congress in 1939. Thus, in the twenties and thirties, the ideological image of Gandhi, as the leftists and the socialists viewed it, was that of a reformist and not of a revolutionary, who believed in any ideology of radical social change.

However, Gandhi's ideological profile began to change perceptively in the early forties and more discernibly after he gave the call of 'open rebellion' in 1942. In the course of his detention for over two years in the Aga Khan Palace at Pune, Gandhi made a rethinking about many of his earlier socio-economic ideas. He made a study of the socialist and Communist literature and was found no longer averse to socialist ideas. According to Pyarelal, one of his secretaries, who was with Gandhi in his detention camp : "During the period of his detention in the Aga Khan Palace, he studied

Communist literature. He has a scientific mind and the knowledge of Communism and Socialism picked up from his talks with friends but casual reading did not satisfy him. He read *Das Capital* and went through some of the other writings of Marx as also of Engels, Lenin and Stalin. He read some books about Red China too." Pyarelal revealed this information in a piece of an article written in the *Harijan* in 1946.

This exercise in the study of the principles and practices of Socialism and Communism did not mean that it changed the basic views of Gandhi, but it certainly helped him to understand the minds of the socialists and other leftists and rethink about the practical values of many of his fundamental ideas. It also gave him an opportunity to feel the necessity of reorientation of many of his basic ideas to integrate them into the concept of an ideology of social change and national reconstruction. Indeed, it was during this period of detention that the Gandhian idea of Sarvodaya was conceptualized in the form of a general outlook of an ideology, understandable to the socialists and other leftists.

After coming out of detention in the mid-forties, Gandhi began to talk on many occasions in terms of socialism and about the neccessity of radical socio-political changes. He no longer showed any blanket opposition to 'machine' or 'industrialisation' or economic planning. He made it clear that he was wholly for elimination of capitalism and of radically changing the capitalist ownership of the means of production and distribution. He was found to express his views in justification of socio-economic equality and equitable distribution of the wealth produced. Gandhi also urged for revolutionary changes in the political and socio-economic structure of the Indian society. He was seen, during the last phase of his life, to interpret his views often in terms of 'non-violent socialism'. However, he made it explicitly clear that his concepts of Socialism or Sarvodaya were, philosophically as also with regard to the method of achieving its objectives, fundamentally very different from Communism or the Marxian outlook of Socialism. He made it clear that what he wanted was to move ahead of the ideas and experiments of Communism and his mission was to establish a Sarvodaya Samaj or

a people's Swaraj in India.

Subhas was not in India when Gandhi came out with his newly oriented ideas of non-violent socialism or Sarvodaya after World War II. Gandhi's thinking now appeared quite radical and even revolutionary in many ways to many left-wing and socialist leaders, setting them to fresh evaluation of the Gandhian ideology of Sarvodaya. Had Subhas been in India, when Gandhi was still alive, he would have certainly felt impelled to compare anew his ideological views with the reoriented socio-economic and political thinking of Gandhi. If this eventuality—an eventuality which would have proved to be fateful for the future of India—did really materialise, the two men of destiny of India would have happily rediscovered how nearer they had come to one another in their ideological thinking about the socio-economic reconstruction of their country. Gandhi is gone and Subhas is not with us—and if we now try to re-evaluate the basic concepts behind the ideologies of Sarvodaya and Samyavad, forgetting the history of their conflicts in the past, it will be found that most of the fundamental postulates underlying their thinking are either strikingly common or very close to one another.

INDIAN CONCEPT

The ideas of Sarvodaya or non-violent socialism of Gandhi and Samyavad or Indian socialism of Subhas bear the characteristic connotation of an Indian concept. It is so because both Gandhi and Subhas had abiding faith in the heritage of Indian culture and civilization and they, therefore, showed an identically purposive inclination to endow their ideological thinking with a sense of Indianness and Indian values. Both of them aspired to reconstruct the national life of India in an Indian way and on the basis of Indian principles and, as such, they urged the Indian people to evolve their national ideology essentially as an Indian concept.

Both the ideological thinking of Sarvodaya and Samyavad identically conceived the values of equality and social justice as the cardinal principles to work out all the political and socio-economic ideals each one of them hoped to fulfil. However, the rationale behind this perception of equality as found

to be advanced by the Marxian theory of surplus value or its economic interpretation of human relations could not convince either Gandhi or Subhas as being valid or abidingly purposeful. To them, the spiritual approach of Indian humanism, which treated all human beings as essentially equal, offered deeper and more universal justification for accepting this doctrine. Indeed, the value of Indian spiritual humanism was the kind of a fundamental faith with both Gandhi and Subhas, and it was, in fact, the inspirational genesis of their ideas of Sarvodaya and Samyavad.

This outlook of Indian humanism, based on the spiritual belief of essential oneness and equality of men, found a symbolic manifestation in the concept of Daridra Narayan of Swami Vivekananda. Both Gandhi and Subhas accepted the mission of serving the Daridra Narayan as the primary impulse to fulfil their ideals of Sarvodaya and Samyavad. Thus said Gandhi in his characteristic way of expressing his ideological views : "Daridra Narayan is one of the millions of names by which humanity knows God, ... and it means God of the poor, God appearing in the hearts of the poor . . . They are my first and last because I recognize no God except that God that is to be found in the hearts of the dumb millions." In his outlook about Indian humanism Gandhi wrote in the *Harijan* : "Socialism was not born with the discovery of the misuse of capital by capitalists . . . Socialism, even communism, is explicit in the first verse of the *Ishopanishad*."

The same idea was voiced by Subhas, while propagating his thoughts about Indian Socialism, but in a different style. He said as early as 1929 : "This socialism did not derive its birth from the books of Karl Marx. It had its origin in the thoughts and culture of India. The gospel of democracy that was preached by Vivekananda has manifested itself fully in his writings ... that Narayan lives amongst those who till the land, prepare our bread by the sweat of their brow, those who in the midst of grinding poverty kept the torch of our civilization, culture and religion burning. Now-a-days, new thoughts of socialism are getting into India from the West and it is revolutionizing the thoughts of many, but the ideas of Socialism are not a novelty in this country. We regard them as such because

we have lost the thread of our own country."

Many sophisticated intellectuals, who are well versed in the materialistic reasonings of Marxian metaphysics, euphemistically denoted as scientific interpretation of history, will scoff at the concept of spiritualistic evaluation of unity and equality of men on the basis of the concept of Indian spiritual humanism. They will even feel inclined to ridicule it as too naive and over-simple. This kind of adverse Marxian criticism against their philosophical thinking was not unknown to Gandhi or Subhas—nevertheless, they stood firm in their faith in the Indian concept of spiritual humanism, because they believed that its justifications were more penetrating and more fundamental than the presumptive reasonings of the Marxian logic of dialectic materialism.

SUBHAS'S SOCIALIST OUTLOOK

Preaching of the message of freedom and socialism became the first article of faith with Subhas since his release from Mandalay Jail in 1927. He missed no opportunity in propagating his ideals of socialism along with his mission of complete independence of India. Addressing students at Amraoti in 1929, Subhas said : "If freedom is to be the cardinal principle of our life, the 'elan vital' of all our activity, it should also be made the basis of social reconstruction. It will be seen at once that if the principle of freedom is applied to society and made the fundamental basis of the future, it will mean nothing short of a social revolution . . . In society, in the body politic and in the economic world, each individual should be as free as any other and should enjoy the same status. Equal opportunities to all, equitable distribution of wealth, abolition of all social barriers, including caste and emancipation from foreign rule—these should be some of the basic principles of the new society we want to build up." Addressing the Nawjawan Bharat Sabha, the organisation that was set up by Bhagat Singh, he urged the youths in 1931 at Karachi that they should set the objective of social revolution as the final goal of Indian freedom. Explaining his ideas about socialism to the heirs of the future, he proclaimed : "I want a socialist republic in India."

Russia also declared itself, after the 1917 Revolution, as a 'socialist republic'. Naturally, the question arose what type of socialist republic did Subhas want to build up in India ? In those days, M.N. Roy, Nehru and Subhas were known as the pioneer advocates of socialism in India. Roy was then an avowed Communist, to whom goes the credit of preparing the background of the formation of the Communist Party of India. Nehru's outlook of socialism was also fully based on his acceptance of the basic doctrine of Communism or Marxism. He said publicly in 1934 that he believed in 'Communist Ideals', adding: "In regard to the methods and approach to the ideal, I may not agree with everything the orthodox Communists have done . . . But I do think that the basic ideology of Communism and its scientific interpretation of history is sound". Later, leaders of the Congress Socialist Party, with Jayaprakash as its principal ideological spokesman, went on preaching socialist ideas, accepting the doctrine of Marxism or Communism as the principal basis of their new thoughts. In fact, among the Congress leaders, who subscribed to the socialist ideas in those days—all of them talked about it in terms of the Marxian doctrine of Communism or Scientific Socialism, as it was alternately called—the only exception among them was Subhas.

Though he was known as the accepted leader of the left-wing in India, nevertheless ignoring all kinds of harsh attacks against his ideological thinking, Subhas made it amply clear that the genesis of his socialist thinking was not Marxism of the Communist doctrine but it was essentially an Indian concept, and what he wanted the Indians to establish was not Marxian Communism but Indian Socialism. While preaching the principles of "justice, equality, freedom, discipline and love" as to "constitute the essence of socialism", he cautioned the Nawjawans of the Bharat Sabha at Lahore in 1929 : "While seeking light and inspiration from abroad, we cannot forget that we should not blindly imitate any other people and that we should assimilate what we learn elsewhere after finding out what will suit our national requirements." While differing from the views of "the adherents and followers of Moscow," Subhas categorically said in his presidential address in the

United Trade Union Congress in 1931 : "I have no doubt in my mind that the salvation of India, as of the world, depends on socialism. India should learn from and profit by the experience of other nations, but India should evolve her own form as well as her own methods in keeping with her own needs and her own environments . . . It may be that the form of socialism which India will evolve will have something new and original about it which will be of benefit to the whole world." In his 1933 London Conference speech, Subhas said again : "I have no doubt in my mind that in solving the problems of our national life when India is free, original thought and fresh experiment will be necessary, if we are to achieve success . . . . The socio-economic condition of free India will be altogether different from what prevails now . . . Free India will not be a land of capitalists, landlords and castes. Free India will be a social and political democracy."

Subhas continued to ceaselessly propagate his idea of Indian socialism throughout his career of whirlwind activities either in India or abroad. In his Haripura Congress address, he clearly outlined the programme of socialist reconstruction of free India. In the course of his 'great escape' from India, he wrote to his comrades in India from his Kabul hideout in January 1941 that he stood for "a thoroughly modern and Socialist State ; scientific large-scale production for the economic regeneration of the country ; social ownership and control of both production and distribution ; freedom for the individual in the matter of religious worship ; equal rights for every individual ; linguistic and cultural autonomy for all sections of the Indian community ; and application of the principles of equality and social justice in building up the new order in Free India." But he told his friends that as regards their basic perception about socialism, they should "not swear by copybook maxims or by textbooks of politics or economics." In his historic speech at Tokyo in November 1944, which was a kind of his ideological testament, he said, while restating his socialist ideas and outlining its programme that "In solving (our) problems, we want to work our own way. We will, naturally, study experiments made in other countries but we have to solve our own problems in an Indian way and under Indian

conditions. Therefore, the system that we shall ultimately set up will be an Indian system to suit the Indian people."

In giving out his ideas about socialism, Subhas was always opposed to any doctrinal concept of any ideology like Communism. Marxism claimed that it discovered the law of evolution of human civilization, the ultimate consummation of which will be the supreme attainment of a Communist society as its final goal. Differing from such a monistic concept of evolution of human history, as propounded by the Marxian doctrine, Subhas rather stridently observed in his Tokyo speech, "It would be foolish for any one to say that any one system represents the last stage in human progress. As students of philosophy, you should admit that human progress can never stop and out of the past experience of the world we have to produce a new system."

NON-VIOLENT SOCIALISM

Till 1946, Gandhi did not say anything either in favour of socialism or against it. In fact, in earlier days, when he formulated his Constructive Programme, he did it according to his spiritual concept of Indian humanism. He was never inclined to talk about his plan of socio-economic reconstruction of the national life of India in terms of any known political or economic theory or doctrine. But his views, even in those days, were sensitively humane in perception, although the Marxian theorist would call it 'utopian' or as mere idealistic. Gandhi wrote in the *Young India* in 1931 : "What a calamity it must be to have 300 millions unemployed, several millions becoming degraded every day for want of employment, devoid of self-respect, devoid of faith of God. I can take before them a message of God only by taking the message of sacred work before them. It is good enough to talk of God whilst we are sitting here after a nice breakfast and looking forward to a nicer luncheon, but how am I to talk of God to the millions who have to go without two meals a day ? To them God can only appear as bread and butter." What Gandhi wanted was the political and economic independence of the common people and that is why he significantly said : "Swaraj of my dream is the poor man's Swaraj." (*Young India*, 1931).

In July 1947, Gandhi wrote a few pieces in the *Harijan*, for the first time explaining his ideas about socialism. He wrote : "Today there is gross economic inequality. The basis of socialism is economic equality. There can be no Ram Rajya in the present state of inequitous inequalities in which a few roll in riches and the masses do not get even enough to eat." In another, he wrote : "Socialism is a beautiful word. So far as I am aware, in socialism all the members of the society are equal—none low, none high. This is socialism. In it the prince and the peasant, the employers and the employees are all on the same level. In terms of religion, there is no duality in socialism. It is all unity . . . . In the unity of my conception there is perfect unity in the plurality of designs."

Although the style and expression of Gandhi in explaining his ideas about socialism are very simple, yet their implication is basic in concept. Firstly, Gandhi's thinking about socialism is in no way Marxian or near-Marxian in concept, and it is essentially rooted to his faith in the spiritual evaluation of Indian humanism. Secondly, in his characteristic expression about his belief in "perfect unity in the plurality of designs", Gandhi made it clear that he did not believe in the monistic, i.e., economic theory of Marx in interpreting human values. He, on the contrary, believed in the philosophical or sociological outlook of pluralism.

Thus, in the evaluation of essential ideas of socialism, the perceptions of Gandhi and Subhas were unmistakably identical. In his outlook of socialism, Subhas thought it to be unscientific to "swear by copybook maxims" of Marxism. Nehru, however, positively affirmed : "I do think that the basic ideology of communism and scientific interpretation of history is sound." This view was subscribed by Jayaprakash and most other Socialists as well till Gandhi was alive—however, Subhas like Gandhi could not accept the theory of materialistic interpretation of the history of Marx. As Subhas wrote in his book in 1935, which he reiterated in his Tokyo speech in 1944 : " . . . according to Marxism, too much importance is given to the economic factor in human life . . . which we do not fully agree. We fully appreciate the importance of the economic factor which was formerly ignored but it is not necessary to

over-emphasise it."

Gandhi made another deeply philosophical observation, though cryptically, about his concept of socialism in the same article that he published in 1946. He wrote : "In order to reach this state (i.e., unity in the plurality), we may not look on things philosophically and say that we need not make a move until all are converted to socialism. Without changing our lives, we may go on giving addresses, forming parties and hawk-like seize the game when it comes in our way. This is no socialism. The more we treat it as a game to be seized, the further it must recede from us. Socialism begins with the first convert. If there is one such, you can add zeroes to the one and the first zero will account for 10 and every addition will account for 10 times the previous number. If, however, the beginning is zero in other words, no one makes the beginning, multiplicity of zeroes will also produce zero value. Time and paper occupied in writing zeroes will be so much waste. This socialism is as pure as crystal."

Gandhi himself showed the way by converting himself to this process of achieving socialism. He turned his Ashram almost into a commune, where every inmate had an equal right, an equal opportunity and an equal facility. From his morning prayer to evening prayer till he went to bed, he openly shared the company and the amenities of other inmates of the Ashram. Inquisitively studying the routine of the daily life of Gandhi for seven days in his Wardha Ashram, Louis Fischer amazedly observed in *A Week With Gandhi* : "Gandhi has no privacy . . . " Indeed, the life of Gandhi vividly reflected the image of what an ideal of a socialist man should be.

Marxism, according to its philosophy of dialectical materialism, believes that if the system of economic relations are changed under the authoritarian regime of a proletarian state concepts of social values, human values as well will necessarily and automatically change. Even after about seven decades of experiments with the Communist theory of equalization in Russia, this theory proved tragically infructuous. That is why Gandhi observed very indicatively in the conclusion of his article on Socialism : "To my knowledge there is no country in the world which is purely socialistic."

This Gandhian idea of the beginning of socialism with 'the first convert', means, philosophically, that socialism should be treated essentially as a culture of life. Unless the individual and the society can be imbibed with the values of socialist culture, Socialism or Communism set up in any country, principally under the violent compulsion of a state and guided by any absolutist party, was bound to assume the character of a kind of a 'human zoo', and nothing more than that.

The mind of Subhas was seen agitated with a sense of immediacy for a 'forced march' type of socio-economic reconstruction of India and, as such, he was not wholly opposed to enforce considerable compulsion of the state for socialist transformation, but he wholly agreed with the concept of Gandhi that the ultimate success of socialism rests in its acceptance as a culture of life. He also, thus, observed : "The fanatic adherents of an 'ism' believe that, once their doctrine is established, it will remove all miseries of the world. But, I think, no 'ism' or ideology can succeed to make human progress, unless human character is changed, and that is why Swami Vivekananda used to say : 'Man-making is my mission'."

During the days of the struggle for Indian freedom, only Subhas was known to be an avowedly non-Marxian advocate of Socialism whose views, in many ways, were much closer to the Gandhian concept of socialism though it was not so focussed publicly in those days. Earlier protagonists of the Marxian doctrine of Socialism like M.N. Roy, Nehru and Jayaprakash later changed their views quite radically, but not when Gandhi was alive. Roy, the most prominent among the architects of Communism in India, almost totally discarded the Marxian doctrine in search of a social philosophy of 'new humanism'. Nehru discarded Marxism as "a back-dated and outmoded ideology" only in the early fifties. Jayaprakash was wholly converted to Gandhism after the martyrdom of the Mahatma and became the most powerful exponent of Gandhian Sarvodaya in the sixties and seventies.

Gandhi used to describe himself as a 'practical idealist', but later he said : "I believe myself to be a revolutionary—a non-violent revolutionary." Indeed, in the mid-forties, Gandhi came out with revolutionary ideas of sweeping social change.

He said : "The real meaning of economic equality of Marx was : 'To each according to his need'." But, Gandhi added, "if India is to live an exemplary life of independence which would be the envy of the world, all the *Bhangis*, doctors, lawyers, teachers, merchants and others would get the same wages for an honest day's work. Indian society may never reach that goal but it is the duty of every Indian to set his sail towards that goal." If revolution means radical social changes, Gandhi's image began to glow as a total revolutionary during the last few years of his life.

Subhas was vibrating with a mission of Indian revolution as early as 1929. He told the students at Amraoti in the same year : "We want an awakening from within—a radical transformation of our life. Tinkering reform will not do; superficial remedies will be of no avail. What is wanted is a transfiguration of our whole life—a complete revolution." This call for 'complete revolution' of Subhas later found a powerful echo in the voice of Jayaprakash who urged to interpret the dynamics of Gandhian Sarvodaya in the concept of 'total revolution'.

OUTLOOK ON COMMUNIST RUSSIA

In the thirties, Russia was looked upon as the beacon of the ideal of social revolution and the ideology of Communism was viewed as its source of social illumination. Many Congress leaders were emotionally charmed by the call of Communism and, as for the Communists in India, they treated Russia as the Fatherland of their ideological and organisational allegiance. Among all leaders of the Congress, only Gandhi and Subhas maintained a clear attitude towards Communism and Russia, the only Communist state in the world of those days. Neither of them could agree with the basic tenets of the philosophy of Communism, nor did they consider it patriotically honourable to display a mentality of subservience to Russian politics, although none of them showed any particular attitude of hostility towards that country.

Gandhi observed in unmistakable words : "It is my implicit faith that India will not be able to imbibe Communism and Lenin's cult will not take root in this soil." He could not

accept Communist doctrine because, according to him, it was "the necessary result of the modern materialistic civilization." He stated further : "In so far as it is based on violence and denial of God, it repels me."

In his criticism of Communism, Subhas wrote in *The Indian Struggle* : "While many of the economic ideas of Communism would make a strong appeal to Indians, there are other ideas which will have a contrary effect. . . .Communism in Russia has grown to be anti-religious and atheistic. . . . In India...there is no feeling against religion. . . . Materialistic interpretation of history which seems to be the cardinal point in Communist theory will not find unqualified acceptance in India, even among those who would be disposed to accept the economic contents of communism." He clearly reiterated his views about the unacceptability of Communist theory again in his Tokyo speech.

About the subservience of the Indian Communists towards Russia, Gandhi wrote in 1946 : "The Communists seem to take their instruction from Russia, whom they regard as their spiritual home rather than India. I cannot countenance this dependence on an outside power." Gandhi argued, if "this dependence on outside power" and "foreign ideologies" continued "we shall not deserve to exist as an independent country." He said further, "I would accept them only to the extent that I can assimilate them and adopt them to the Indian scene. But I must refuse to go under them".

Subhas was always keen to maintain friendly relations with all the countries, irrespective of their ideological professions, because he wanted to keep the option open for cultivating their sympathies in favour of India's freedom struggle against the British. Notwithstanding this strategic outlook, he categorically wrote in his book in 1934 : "while . . . . it would be safe to predict that India will not become a new edition of Soviet Russia, one may say with equal strength that all the modern socio-political movements and experiments in Europe and in America will have considerable effect on India's development." He again said at Tokyo in 1944 : "People in India have not been interested so much in the Communist movement as in the work of reconstruction in Soviet Russia—in the

rapid industrialization of that country also in the way in which the Soviet Government solved the problems of minorities. It is this constructive achievement of the Soviet Government which was studied with great interest by the people in our country. As a matter of fact, intellectuals like our poet Tagore, who had no interest in Communism as such, was profoundly impressed, when they visited Russia, in the work of education reconstruction in that country."

Thus, both Gandhi and Subhas wanted India to develop her national ideology as distinctly different from Communism and yet wanted to maintain friendly, but not subservient, relations with Russia, the only example of a Communist state, then, in the world.

PLANNING FOR EMPLOYMENT

Gandhi was found to be reconciled to the idea of economic planning only in 1946, when he wrote a preface to the book, *The Gandhian Planning* by Sriman Narayan. In 1938, Subhas had to work hard for over nine months to overcome Gandhian opposition to his move to set up the first National Planning Committee of India, by mobilizing the support of scientists, industrialists, Congress ministers, Congress leaders, journalists and other publicmen from all over the country. When this committee was set up in December 1938, everybody expected Subhas to head this body, which was in every sense his own creation. But on a suggestion from Subhas, Nehru who was then in London, was made the chairman of the committee, because he believed that Gandhi would at least tolerate this committee with Nehru to pilot it. Although Gandhi did not any more frontally oppose the committee, yet he wrote about it in the *Harijan* in 1940 : "Pandit Nehru wants industrialization because he thinks that, if it is socialized, it would be free from the evils of capitalism. My own view is that the evils are inherent in industrialization and no amount of socialization can remove them."

In 1946, Gandhi changed his views and he was seen no longer opposed to industrialization as such, but he was anxious to see that (i) khadi and cottage industries were not destroyed, (ii) moral and human values of the workers were

not made the vagaries of industrialism and (iii) the power of capitalism was not increased. The basic principle of his planning was the removal of unemployment and poverty and he stressed that the mass production by the masses in the spheres of khadi, cottage and small-scale industries and small-unit production of consumer goods were ensured. He was no more opposed to machines but he wanted machine as tools of labour-intensive works for expanding the scope of greater employment, ensuring individual dignity and human values of the producers. He also agreed to large-scale industrialization in the field of key and heavy industries.

Although the perspective of Subhas was somewhat different from Gandhi in regard to economic planning, yet he always highlighted the task of the removal of unemployment and poverty, like Gandhi, as the principal objectives of national planning. Economic planning was a very basic concept with Subhas, and he wrote about it pointedly in 1934 in *The Indian Struggle*. He dealt with the subject elaborately in his presidential address of the Haripura Congress and in many other speeches he made thereafter. He explained his concept of planning particularly at the meeting of the Congress ministers of industries in 1938 and again in his address while inaugurating the National Planning Committee later. Even during the hectic days of the Azad Hind revolution, he had set up planning cells at Berlin and, thereafter, at Singapore. In his Tokyo speech in 1944, he succinctly outlined his objectives and priorities of economic planning in free India. In it he said : "We want to build up a new and a modern nation on the basis of our old culture and civilization. For that we need modern industries, a modern army and all those things necessary to preserve our existence and our freedom under modern conditions . . . . The moment India is free, the most important problem will be the organizing of our national defence. For that, we shall have to build up modern war industries so that we may produce arms that we shall need for self-defence. This will mean a very big programme of industrialization." He further said : "The next problem in the degree of importance will be. . . . to give employment to the millions of unemployed in India . . . . and to relieve the

appalling poverty which now exists among the masses of the Indian people. The third problem will be the problem of education. . . . at least to give elementary education to the Indian masses as soon as possible, along with it to give facilities in the matter of higher education." Subhas agreed with Gandhi that Hindustani should be the national language of India, but he advocated the use of 'Latin script' for it.

It will now be found that after Gandhi's reconciliation with the necessity of industrialization in the sectors of key and heavy industries, the perspectives of planning of Subhas and Gandhi had no wide gap. In his address to the industries ministers' conference held in Delhi on October 2, 1938, on the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, among other issues, Subhas particularly stressed that the principal objectives of planning should be to tackle "with the problem of poverty and unemployment . . . . improve the miserable lot of our peasantry and raise the general standard of living."

In his attempts to remove Gandhi's fear, he said, ". . . . there need not be any conflict between cottage industries and large-scale industries. . . . I am a firm believer in the need of developing our cottage industries, though I also hold that we have to reconcile ourselves to industrialization. . . . Industrialization does not, therefore, mean that we turn our back on cottage industries. . . . We shall have to decide which industries should he developed on a cottage basis and which on large-scale basis. In the peculiar national economy which exists in India today, and in view of the limited resources of our people, we should do our best to develop cottage industries, side by side with large-scale industries. Industries may be roughly classified under three heads—heavy, medium and cottage industries."

Thus, like Gandhi, Subhas was also all for leaving medium and cottage industries outside the scope of large-scale and centralized production so that the maximum scope for mass production by the masses and for the masses could be ensured for opening opportunities of greater employment under conditions of decentralization.

The major difference between Gandhi and Subhas on planning concerned the area of large-scale industries.

However, Gandhi later agreed : "I am socialist enough to say that such factories should be nationalized, state-controlled. . . . Heavy industries will need be centralized and nationalized. But it will occupy the least part of the vast national activity which will mainly be in the villages. I would have state-ownership, where a large number of people have to work together. The ownership of the products of their labour, whether skilled or unskilled, will vest in them through the state." (*Harijan*, 46).

Thus, Gandhi agreed to the economic principles that (i) large-scale industrialization in the sector of heavy industries will be necessary; (ii) production of such industries will be centralized; (iii) the state will come forward to undertake the ownership of such large-scale production; and (iv) workers will have a share in its ownership. However, Gandhi wanted that medium and cottage industries should be left to the system of small-unit production, and such units should be allowed to continue and located in rural areas generally. Subhas also emphasised all these points in all his major speeches and writings on planning in 1938.

In his latest talk on planning at Tokyo, Subhas said in November 1944 : "We cannot leave the economic problem to private initiative to solve. If we leave it to private initiative to solve the problem of poverty and unemployment, it will probably take centuries. Therefore, public opinion in India is in favour of some sort of a socialist system (in which) the State will take over the responsibility for industrializing the country or modernizing agriculture and put through reforms within a short period."

Although there were no basic differences between Gandhi and Subhas in regard to objectives and structural programme of planning, yet Subhas was always keen for expeditiously solving the problems of unemployment and poverty, and for that his emphasis on industrialization was greater in degree than that of Gandhi. He wanted modern amenities for the people to develop India into a modern nation, although he was also opposed to overmaterialistic craze of the West, like Gandhi. He was also of the opinion, though somewhat differently from Gandhi, that if the modern methods of

science were adopted to industrial and agricultural production, a part of the rural people will have to be diverted to industry. Thus, said Subhas to the Congress ministers of industries in 1938 : "It is our aim to see that everybody—man, woman and child—is better clothed, better educated and has sufficient leisure for recreation and for cultural activity. If this aim is to be realised, the quantity of industrial products has to be increased considerably; necessary works have to be organized and a large proportion of village population has to be diverted to industrial occupation."

Subhas, like Gandhi, believed that the problems of Indian peasantry should receive greater attention of Indian planning. Criticizing the outlook of "overemphasis" of the Marxian theory and Soviet Russia on "the problem of the working class", Subhas said in his Tokyo speech : "India being predominantly a country of the peasants, the problem of the peasants will be more important than the problem of the working classes." He further warned the Indian planners in 1944, like Gandhi, "If we do not tackle the economic question from the point of view of the masses, the majority of whom are poor, we shall produce the same confusion or the same difficulties in our country as in China" (of the days of Chiang Kai shek).

But planners in free India paid little attention to the principles, priorities and objectives of planning as laid down by Gandhi and Subhas, leading, in consequence, to increasing poverty and unemployment of the masses and ever-growing concentration of wealth in the hands of the privileged classes after completion of so many successive five-year plans.

CLASS-WAR NOT NECESSARY

Gandhi and Subhas stood for establishing a Sarvodaya or Samyavadi society, in which capitalism was not expected to have any place. Both of them were known as two supreme leaders of India's national movement, who had a significant role to play in developing the peasant and workers movement as well. Gandhi led the historic Champaran and then Kharai, Bordoloi and other movements of the peasants. He also

organized an exemplary labour movement and labour union at Ahmedabad.

Subhas was also in the forefront in leading the historic Tata strike at Jamshedpur in the early thirties. During this period he participated in leading the strikes of the Assam-Bengal railwaymen. He was also the only Congress leader of the highest echelon who presided over the Trade Union Congress in 1931. Later, he was behind the kisan movement led by his close colleague Swami Sahajananda. Thus, Gandhi and Subhas had their acknowledged roles in the workers and peasants movements of India, the ultimate objective of which was the abolition of capitalism and feudalism in free India.

Although Gandhi and Subhas believed in the rights of the workers to strike, they did not agree with the theory of the class war of the Communists which, according to their concept of materialistic interpretation of history is considered as the principal motivational force behind the movement of human history. It also believed that under 'ripe political and social conditions', the 'class war' should be converted into 'civil war' for the seizure of power under the leadership of workers for establishing the 'dictatorship of the proletariat.' Neither Gandhi nor Subhas agreed with this theory of class war and its methodology, particularly in relation to Indian conditions.

As a believer in non-violent means, Gandhi advocated a 'theory of trusteeship' for the conversion of capitalism to social ownership of the means of industrial production. Gandhi said in 1931 : "By the non-violent method we seek not to destroy the capitalist; we seek to destroy capitalism. We invite the capitalist to regard himself as a trustee for those on whom he depends for the making, the retention and the increase of his capital." He further clarified this concept of trusteeship in 1947, when the said : "The choice of successor of a trustee should be given to the original owner who became the first trustee, but the choice must be finalized by the state, ... and trusteeship should become a legalized institution, ... it is to avoid confiscation." He also said earlier : "A trustee has no heir but the public".

If he failed to convert the capitalist to his theory of trusteeship, Gandhi, though he disapproved class war, was

nevertheless all for the adoption of the last non-violent means of non-cooperation and satyagraha for the abolition of capitalism. He said as early as in 1931 : "I am carrying on a revolution. . . . on behalf of the workers and peasants . .Some have called me the greatest revolutionary of my time. It may be false, but I believe myself to be a revolutionary—a non-violent revolutionary. My means are non-cooperation. No person can amass wealth without the co-operation, willing or forced, of the people concerned." This means that he visualized a non-violent general strike—or satyagraha as he preferred to call such a means—to apply for the abolition of capitalism, if needed, as the last resort.

Subhas did not say anything, for or against the Gandhian theory of trusteeship, but he was also against the method of seizure of power through class war for establishing socialism. He believed that if a party with a "clear socialist ideology, programme and plan of action" came to power through a democratic process, it would be possible to achieve the objectives of the abolition of capitalism. This is why Subhas said in his Tokyo speech : "Class conflict is something that is quite unnecessary in India. If the Government of Free India begins to work as the organ of the masses, then there is no need for a class conflict. We can solve our problems by making the State the servant of the masses."

What Subhas said in 1944, Gandhi told almost the same thing, but in his own style, in 1947: "If they (rajas and capitalists) do not become trustee of their own accord, force of circumstances will compel the reform unless they court utter destruction. When Panchayat Raj is established, public opinion will do what violence can never do. The present power of the zamindars, the capitalists and rajas can hold sway only so long as the common people do not realize their own strength. If the people non-cooperate with the evil of zamindari or capitalism, it must die of inanition. In Panchayat Raj only the Panchayat will be obeyed and the Panchayat can only work through the law of their making." Here, by Panchayat Raj Gandhi meant the democratic organ of the State.

The two revolutionaries, Gandhi and Subhas, were firm in their objective of the abolition of capitalism and feudalism.

Gandhi went to the extent of giving a warning that a violent and bloody revolution is a certainty one day unless there is voluntary abdication of riches and the power that riches give and sharing them for the common masses". In this strident warning Gandhi reflected the voice of Subhas well.

PANCHAYAT RAJ

Gandhi talked of Ramrajya and Gram Swaraj or Panchayat Raj as his concept of the State in free India. He wanted India to flourish as a democratic country based on 'disciplined individual freedom,' but he desired to build its edifice on the village '*panch*' as its principal plinth. He also believed in the democratic principle of keeping "room for all schools of thought" in the State with least centralized power so that its 'citizens and societies' were not turned into its 'automatons and slaves.' He said : "True democracy cannot be worked out by 20 men sitting at the centre. It has to be worked from below by the people of every village." (*Harijan*, 1940). He also discarded the superman theory of the concept of a fascist state, as he observed "...the effort of a supermanly powerful individual can never make the community conscious of its corporate strength ...In this age of democracy, the desired results are achieved by collective efforts of the people." (*Harijan* 1940). He also discountenanced the Communist theory of a proletarian State, and said : "I do not believe in the doctrine of the greatest good of the greatest number...It is a heartless doctrine and has done harm to humanity. The only real, diginified human doctrine is the greatest good of all." (Diary of Mahadev Desai). He was also not much enamoured of the British system of parliamentary democracy. Quintessentially, he outlined his concept of polity in free India : "By independence I do not mean an imitation of the British House of Commons or Soviet Rule of Russia or the Fascist rule of Italy or the Nazi rule of Germany. They have systems suited to their genius. We must have ours suited to ours. What that can be is more than I can tell. I have described it as Ram Raj, i.e., sovereignty of the people based on pure moral authority."

Gandhi did not detail his thought about the constitution of free India. But he wrote in the *Harijan* in the forties : "My

idea of village *Swaraj* is that it is a complete republic, independent of its neighbours, for its vital wants, and yet inter-dependent for many others in which dependence is a necessity. Thus, every village's first concern will be to grow its own food crops and cotton for its cloth. It should have reserves for its cattle, recreation and playground for adults and children. Then if there is more land available, it will grow useful money crops... The village will maintain a village theatre, school and public hall. It will have its own water works, ensuring clean supply... Education will be compulsory up to the final basic course. As far as possible every activity will be conducted on a cooperative basis. There will be no caste. Non-violence, with its technique of satyagraha and non-cooperation, will have the sanction of the village community. There will be compulsory village guards who will be selected by rotation from the register maintained by the village. The government of the village will be conducted by the panchayat of five persons, annually elected by adult villagers, male and female, possessing minimum prescribed qualifications. They will have all the authority and jurisdiction required. A Panchayat will be legislature, judiciary and executive combined to operate for its years of office... Here is perfect democracy based upon individual freedom...

"In this structure composed of innumerable villages, there will be ever-widening, never-ascending circles. Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. But it will be an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual...till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals... ever humble, sharing the majesty of the oceanic circle of which they are integral units."

Gandhi described this ideal of a state as "a state of enlightened anarchy" where "national life becomes so perfect as to become self-regulated" and where "no representation becomes necessary...(as) there is no political power because there is no state." But as a 'practical realist', as he sometimes described himself, Gandhi knew that such a dream of an ideal "non-violent anarchic state...is never realized in life." He, therefore, said : "A government cannot succeed in becoming entirely non-violent. I do not conceive of such a golden age."

Subhas was idealist in his personal outlook of life but in

his practical approach to ideological thinking and political ideas and actions he behaved in a strikingly pragmatic manner and with a sense of realpolitik. He showed concern for the immediate problem of the present day India and not of any conjectural future. He, therefore, thought of a state in free India, which will be fit to act as the national piston to canalize the energy of the Indian people towards fulfilling the urgent task of speedy and purposive socio-economic reconstruction of the country. In his concept about Indian polity, Subhas wanted to combine the people's initiative at the bottom with the powerful drive of a strong authority of the state at the Centre.

Subhas was opposed to a fascist or Communist concept of totalitarian state and the British pattern of parliamentary government like Gandhi. As Gandhi wrote that he did not like "imitation of the British House of Commons", so did Subhas say in 1934 that free India "will not stand for a democracy in the mid-Victorian sense of the term." His vision of the political structure of the Indian state was that of a Panchayat Raj like that of Gandhi. He almost echoed the voice of Gandhi when he wrote in *The Indian Struggle* that free India "will seek to build up a new social structure on the basis of the village communities of the past that were ruled by the village 'Panch'."

Subhas had always been an advocate for democracy. In his 1933 London speech he hoped to set up "a political and social democracy in India." In his Haripura Congress address, Subhas said : "The party that wins freedom for India should also be the party that will put into effect the entire programme of post-war reconstuction...If other people are pitchforked into seats of power, which they were not responsible for capturing, they will lack the strength, confidence and idealism which is indispensable for revolutionary reconstruction...The state will possibly become a totalitarian one, if there be only one party as in countries like Russia, Germany and Italy. But there is no reason why other parties should be banned (in India). Moreover, the party itself will have a democratic basis unlike, for instance, the Nazi Party which is based on the 'leader-principle'. The existence of more than one party

and the democratic basis...of the party will prevent the future Indian state becoming a totalitarian one. Further, the democratic basis of the party will ensure that leaders are not thrust upon the people from above but are elected from below."

Subhas was always anxious for adopting a kind of a policy of "forced march", a phrase he often used in his eagerness to accelerate the pace of socio-economic reconstruction in free India. For this, he stood "...for federal government for India as the ultimate goal," ...but believed in a "strong Central Government with dictatorial powers for some years to come, in order to put India on her feet...(and) holding India together and preventing chaos when Indians are free and are thrown entirely on her resources." He expressed the same ideas in his Tokyo speech, in which he said : "If we are to have an economic structure of a socialist character...(and) carry out economic reforms on a socialist basis... then we must have a political system—a state—of an authoritarian character." But he cautioned that such " a state wili work as an organ, or as the servant of the masses, and not of a clique or of a few rich individuals."

In 1940, Subhas set the objective of "all power to the Indian people" as the power-base of the state in free India. He also hoped that this state will fulfil the task of synthesizing the triple principles of "freedom, democracy and socialism" in rebuilding the national life of India and working out its speedy socio-economic reconstruction. He visualized free India to develop the structure of its polity not on the basis of 'mid-Victorian parliamentary democracy' but on the basis of 'Pan-chayat Raj' with enough power for the people at the bottom but having strong authority at the centre for dealing with the post-independent national problems of unity, security, stability and equitable distribution of national resources for a rapid and uniform socio-economic regeneration of the Indian people as a whole. He hoped that the party which patriotically served the people and dedicatedly sacrificed for achieving national liberty will spontaneously enjoy this moral authority of strong power.

What Subhas thought of a strong or dictatorial power at the centre was the power that was expected to be given morally,

voluntarily and democratically to the party which fought for and won the freedom of the country as the patriotic organ of the people. The Congress, which as the people's party of India, was born out of the nationalist movement of the country, was the party in the vision of Subhas which was expected to deal with the immediate destiny of free India. He could hardly imagine about the eventuality of the tragedy of Indian freedom—the divided freedom of a dominion status under the British Commonwealth—that emerged in a cynical milieu of communal carnage, denudation of the spirit of patriotism and sudden collapse of the moral values of the days of the freedom movement. Even in such a woeful situation, the Congress virtually enjoyed a dictatorial authority at the Centre and in states that was voluntarily conceded to it by the people for at least about two decades. But it failed to fulfil the expectations of Subhas. With all the authoritarian power at its command, the Congress could not achieve national reconstruction and move towards equalitarian socio-economic upliftment of the common masses, nor could it set India to a 'proper footing' of unity, stability and security and progress for the common people of the lowest stratum of the Indian society.

What Subhas thought of a balance of a dictatorial power at the Centre and the people's power at the bottom through the system of Panchayat Raj did not mean to be a polity of one-party rule on the Communist or Fascist pattern. He believed that in a vivacious atmosphere of nascent freedom throbbing in the moral and patriotic awareness of the people, the Congress will succeed to use the voluntarily given dictatorial powers to move towards the cherished goal of political, social, economic and moral liberation of the Indian people in rapid strides.

PHILOSOPHY OF DECENTRALIZATION

The Constructive Programme and the novel means of passive resistance, later redefined as satyagraha, were the two kingpins behind the Gandhian leadership over the Indian people. Till power was transferred to divided India, satyagraha was the main focus of the political movement of Gandhi, but, after his death, the basic thoughts behind his constructive

programme and his socio-economic ideals came to be highlighted in the concept of a revolutionary philosophy of decentralization.

Initially, Gandhi introduced charkha and khadi as a pragmatic economic programme for ameliorating the condition of the poverty-ridden common people, particularly of rural India. His call for Gram-swaraj was intended to remind the people that India survived through centuries of political vicissitudes because of the age-old decentralised institution of village panchayat or Gram-swaraj. Further, Gandhi wanted the Indian leaders to understand that India lived not in the cities but in the seven lakhs of its villages.

Gandhi was the principal leader of the Indian people in the modern age, nevertheless he lived as a 'half-naked fakir' always clad in scanty khadi and had chosen not any metropolis but an ashram first at Sabarmati and then at Wardha—a most backward village, at the centre of India—as his residential abode. His khadi and his ashram were symbol of his complete identification with the Indian masses who in an overwhelming number lived in villages. By this he wanted the political leaders of India to realize that the poor people in common and the rural people in particular should be the main focus of attention of Indian independence.

By reviving charkha and village industries, Gandhi desired to provide at least some means of living for the unemployed, poor millions of India. He said : "If the Government could provide full employment to our people without the help of khadi and village industries, I shall be prepared to wind up my constructive programme." He had no fad, as such, against the machine as he explained : "Mechanization is good when hands are too few for work intended to be accomplished. It is an evil when there are more hands than required for work as in India...The problem with us is not how to find leisure for the teeming millions inhabiting our villages. The problem is how to utilize their idle hours, which are equal to the working days of six months a year" (1934). He continued further : "I would favour the use of the most elaborate machinery if thereby India's pauperism and resulting idleness could be avoided." Gandhi pointed out again : "India has seven

lakhs of villages which take 90 per cent of her population" and he was, therefore, keen on developing a system co-related and co-ordinated with Gram panchayats as basic units of the super-structure of the Indian society. He visualized these units to be self-sufficient in food and khadi production and village industries to make the panchayat unit self-dependent and self-reliant.

In 1941, Gandhi came out, perhaps for the first time, with a philosophical explanation about the basic outlook of his khadi programme. He said : "Khadi mentality means decentralization of production and distribution of necessaries of life." Besides criticizing the economics of industrialization, he now began to give out socio-political reasons of his opposition to it. He said : "Rural economy as I have conceived it eschews exploitation altogether and exploitation is the essence of violence...Industrialization on a mass scale will necessarily lead to a passive or active exploitation of villagers." He also warned : " Industrialization is...going to be a curse for all mankind. Exploitation of one nation by another cannot go on for all time. Industrialization depends entirely on your capacity to exploit, on foreign markets being open to you and on the absence of competitors." He also said that "'industrialism' was the mother of "economic imperialism." In 1947, Gandhi told that Panchayat Raj, based on the principle of devolution of power towards the village, was his idea about the institution of democracy in India that he hoped to flourish.

In the forties, his idea of economic and political decentralization began to germinate into a new socio-political philosophy. As Gandhi never believed in any exercise of academic or theoretical exposition of his philosophical ideas, he expounded his basic ideas either through a concrete programme or in the course of his dealing with live issues facing the Indian people. A day before his assassination, he drafted a kind of a revolutionary testament of his philosophy of decentralization, when he asked the Congress to dissolve itself and he himself decided to go to the masses to build up the people's power at the bottom. In it he said : "India has still to attain social, moral and economic independence in terms of seven hundred

thousand villages as distinguised from its cities and towns."

In the days of the freedom struggle, the left nationalists, socialists or other radicals always believed that Gandhi was essentially a reformist and still they followed him politically as it was known to them that none other than Gandhi could stir up the Indian people to defy the British. Even the staunch Gandhiites also believed that the programme of Gandhi was nothing more than a programme of reformism. Only after his death, the Bhoodan Movement of Acharya Vinoba Bhave succeeded to rouse a new interest in the basic ideas behind the socio-economic thoughts of Gandhi. Finally, it was Jaya-prakash Narayan's renunciation of party politics and his total identification with the Bhoodan and the Sarvodaya movements and his interpretation of Gandhism in the light of modern socio-political theories and particularly as an alternative to both Capitalism and Communism that the revolutionary significance of the Gandhian philosophy of decentralization was brought to widespread public attention in India and abroad as well.

Gandhi was opposed to both Capitalism and Communism as both these systems, as appeared to him were developed on the cardinal principle of centralism. He had nothing much to distinguish between Capitalism and Communism as, in both these systems, political power, economic power and the means of production and distribution were found to be overcentralized. In economics, both these systems believe in overmechanization and overcentralization of industry with the principal object of amassing increasing capital. In a one-party-controlled communist state, political power is absolutely centralized in the denial of individual freedom, whereas in a multi-party-run capitalist democracy people enjoy no participating freedom in the control or motivation of its political and economic power. In both these systems, according to Gandhi, individuals or the people are slavish victims of centralization of political as well as economic power.

To Gandhi, the individual is the lever of civilization and, as such, the individual man should be its vital concern. He therefore, said : "For me justice for the individual, be he the humblest, is everything. All else comes after.....I look upon

an increase in the power of the State with the greatest fear..... If the individual ceases to count, what is left of society ? Individual freedom can make a man voluntarily surrender himself completely to the service of society. If it is wrested from him, he becomes an automaton and society is ruined. No society can possibly be built on denial of freedom." Gandhi, thus, believed that, by applying the principle of devolution of political power and decentralization of economic system of production and distribution, a true society of human freedom could be established. He, therefore, wanted to minimize the power of the state and decentralize the system of economy so that it might lead to the process of an ultimate evolution of a classless, stateless and a non-violent anarchic society.

Marx also, like Bakunin, visualized the goal of communism as the final phase of evolution of an anarchic society. But their concept of anarchism differed from Gandhi's, as in addition to the abolition of class and state, Marx believed that such an anarchic or Communist society will flourish without any right to property, without any attachment of a family and without any recognition of the values of religion as well. What Gandhi believed from a philosophical perspective, completely different from Marx, was that the principle of decentralization is the *sine qua non* for ensuring human dignity and the corporate relation of the humanity. He, therefore, urged that for upholding the moral and spiritual values of humanity and their survival from mechanization and automationization and the consequent dehumanization from the inexorable destiny of Capitalism or Communism, the establishment of a decentralized non-violent anarchic or *sarvodaya samaj* should be the goal of human civilization. This is, in quintessence, the basic postulate of the Gandhian philosophy of decentralization.

RESPONSE OF SUBHAS

Subhas had no scope to directly express his views about the Gandhian philosophy of decentralization, as it developed into a congnizably ideological concept mainly in post-war days. But, even amidst his hectic activities in the war of

Indian liberation, the thought of post-war reconstruction of free India was seen to remain uppermost in his mind. He had set up a special cell in Germany to study various aspects of the theory of economic decentralization. (Unfortunately, its report is missing). In South-East Asia, he appointed a planning committee to draw up a policy of Indian national unity and national reconstruction. Planning for free India was a constant thought with Netaji. In his Tokyo speech, he briefly, yet in exceptional clarity, outlined his ideological ideas which he expected free India to follow.

Subhas was an idealist to the core like Gandhi, but his concern was more for the 'immediate' than of any vision of a distant future. Philosophically also, as a believer in the eternal process of evolution, he did not believe in any preconceived finality, like an anarchic society, as the end-point of the development of human civilization. His immediate object was, thus, to win Indian freedom and undertake a speedy programme of socio-economic reconstruction of independent India. His approach to attain these objectives was discretionally pragmatic and was based on his outlook of realpolitik. Like Gandhi, he was all for the establishment of a casteless and classless Samyavadi Samaj or the people's society in India but he was not inclined to extend his imagination towards any conception of an anarchic society for the future. It can, therefore, be safely guessed that response of Subhas to the Gandhian philosophy of decentralization would have been somewhat mixed.

The Gandhian idea of decentralization in regard to its objectives consisted of two parts—one, about the 'immediate' and, the other, of the 'ultimate'. Subhas wholly agreed with the immediate objectives of Gandhian decentralization in building a Panchayat Raj in India, giving maximum powers or autonomy to the people at the bottom to develop a village swaraj. Subhas stood for a central authority at the apex of the Indian polity, based on the Panchayat system, which, as of necessity for the present situation, Gandhi also did not disagree. About the Gandhian policy of economic reconstruction, Subhas completely agreed to attach primary importance to rural development and to revive and reconstruct

small-scale units of cottage and medium industries, leaving its system of production and management to private initiative. But about the necessity of the development of heavy industries in the centralized sphere, under the initiative of the state, as was emphasised by Subhas, Gandhi was also known to concede to it as an unavoidable requirement for the immediate rebuilding of the economic foundation of free India. Thus, what Subhas underlined as the necessity of balancing the policies of decentralization and centralization in dealing with the immediate problems of political and socio-economic reconstruction of India was more or less in harmony with the immediate objectives of the Gandhian thinking of decentralization of political and economic powers.

About the ultimate objective of the philosophy of Gandhian decentralization, Subhas had no comment to make either for or against it. Even Gandhi considered his dream of establishing a classless and stateless non-violent anarchic society as the ultimate consummation of his idea of sarvodaya samaj as some kind of a utopia. Gandhi himself said : "A government cannot succeed in becoming entirely non-violent, because it represents all people. I do not today conceive of such a golden age. But I do believe in the possibility of a predominantly non-violent society. And I am working for it" (*Harijan*, 1940). Subhas was not an inveterate believer in violence, nor was Gandhi a visionary apostle of non-violence. Gandhi did not, as such, hesitate to describe the violent armed resistance of the Polish people against the simultaneous aggression of their homeland in 1939 by Nazi Germany and Communist Russia as approximate to non-violence. Again, soon after transfer of power, when Pakistani raiders pounced upon Kashmir, Gandhi was the first leader to ask the Government of India to send its army in defence of Kashmir, although Nehru was then fumbling to take such a decision. Gandhi's philosophy of wholly decentralized and non-violent anarchic society was his concept for the future. He was not unmindful of the practical and balanced approach to face the immediate task of national reconstruction of India in which he appeared in the image of a 'practical idealist' as he often used to describe himself.

COMMON MISSION

Mahatma Gandhi and Subhas Bose, no doubt, had shades of differences in their evaluation of the ethics of non-violence and about the degree of its practical applicability in politics, in the governance of the country and in matters of social reconstruction. Nevertheless, the minds of these two men of destiny of India throbbed almost in identical rhythm in their perceptions about the task of evolving a national ideology of India and the programme of immediate reconstruction of the national life of the Indian people. What they thought about it can be briefly summed up in the following precepts:

Both the Mahatma and the Netaji of the Indian people, the two co-architects of India freedom—above all and everything—were two true Indians and two true Indian nationalists. They always dreamt of an Indian national ideology to be evolved in an Indian way and under Indian conditions and in accordance with the heritage of the Indian civilization. Both of them urged the Indian people to build up a modern nation on the basis of their old culture and ancient civilization and the age-old system of Panchayat Raj—a concept of integrated social, economic and political institutions which had always remained inseparable with the organisational system of the Indian civilization.

Both Gandhi and Subhas were opposed to the exploitative system of decadent Capitalism and both of them viewed the absolutely totalitarian and intrinsically materialistic doctrine of Communism as wholly alien to the concepts of Indian values, Indian heritage and the Indian way of life.

Both the Mahatma and the Netaji conceptualized an ideology of Indian Socialism—often called Sarvodaya by Gandhi and Bharatiya Samyavad by Subhas—as essentially an Indian concept based on the spiritual outlook of Indian humanism. Both of them urged the Indian people to evolve their national ideology on the basis of the acceptance of the Indian philosophy of synthesis, and, as such, they emphasised the necessity for a harmonious fusion of the values of spiritualism with the necessity of materiality as the basic perspective of rebuilding the character of the national life of the Indian people. Both of them urged their countrymen to

to build the national constitution of India and the social complex of Indian people on the basis of the synthesis of the fundamental principles of nationalism, democracy, Indian socialism and Indian humanism.

Both Gandhi and Subhas hoped to consolidate Indian freedom and reinvigorate the spirit of national integration of the Indian people on the recognition of the principle of responsive harmony of the various values, cultures and aspirations of the Indian people belonging to various regions, religions, races, communities and linguistic fraternities. Both of them stood for establishing a casteless and classless egalitarian society of the Indian people on the universal recognition of the ideals of equality and social justice, in which all regions, religions, races and cultures will find equal opportunity to pursue their social, cultural and religious ways of life freely. Both of them passionately urged for the abolition of the curse of the hide-bound contours of the caste system and urgently take up measures for the socio-economic liberation of the Schedule Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. They also stressed the necessity of safeguarding the interests of the religious, racial and linguistic minorities.

In building the foundation of the national polity of India, both Gandhi and Subhas were opposed to imitate the political system of Fascism or Communism or the British system of parliamentary democracy. Both of them urged to lay the foundation of the national institution of Indian polity as a Panchayat Raj, based on the age-old Indian system of the rule of the Panch. Both of them wanted to build up the superstructure of Indian polity and the socio-economic base of the Indian society, keeping in view the aim of developing the power of the people at the bottom; and, as such, both of them urged for the gradual devolution of political and economic power. However, Gandhi also acknowledged, along with Subhas, the existing necessity—under the present conditions of national and international co-relations of political and economic factors—of strong government at the Centre for safeguarding the unity, stability and security of the Indian nation and for ensuring equitable distribution of national resources for a uniform national reconstruction of the country.

In the sphere of economic developoment of the country, both Gandhi and Subhas stressed the necessity of drawing up a programme of national planning by giving primary importance to the task of speedy removal of unemployment and poverty of the common masses of India. Both of them, therefore, urged for the adoption of the objective of 'mass production by the masses', particularly in the sectors of cottage and small-scale industries and consumer goods. They also urged for the demarcation of the spheres of medium and large-scale industries. They further enjoined to leave the initiative and leadership of planning, production and management in the rural areas particularly with the people of the areas, assuring, at the same time, financial and marketing assistance by the State. Though Gandhi was averse to industrialism, yet he conceded the necessity of centralized production under state ownership in the fields of the heavy and the key industries as unavoidable under the existing conditions. Subhas was emphatic on centralized production in the sector of key industries, particularly for attaining self-reliance in defence production and for catching up with advancement of the industrialized modern world and making India self-sufficient in unavoidable industrial production. Both of them asked not only for mere nationalization of key industries, heavy industries and financial institutions, but also for their socialization in order to enable the participation of the producers in their management and policy-making. Even in the sphere of key and heavy industries, they urged for setting up of a network of decentralized small units of production for feeding centralized industries. Both of them attached special importance to agricultural and other rural developments as, they pointed out, more than 80 per cent of the Indian people live in villages. They also asked for the speedy abolition of all kinds of fuedalism and landlordism by introducing uniform land tenure and ensuring ownership of the land to the tillers.

NATIONAL LANGUAGE

Both Gandhi and Subhas believed in the objective of developing Hindustani as the national language of India. However, Subhas called for the adoption of Roman script for

it. But none of them asked for the abolition of English altogethers. Both of them urged the Indian people to shun the craze for the a moral Western outlook of materialistic hedonism, while making a national move for strengthening and enlivening the composite national culture of the Indian people on the basis of the Indian concepts of ethics, aesthetics and their concepts of moral and spiritual values.

But, what could be the instrument of national reconstruction and social change that both Gandhi and Subhas hoped free India to materialize ? On this question a major perceptional difference was found in the views of the two. Gandhi was less enthusiastic about the role of the state and political organisations in bringing about the expected change in the national life of India. His emphasis was more on the work of building the people's power through decentralized and independent constructive works and autonomous organisations of constructive workers. Subhas was all for mobilizing the masses, like the peasants, workers, youths, women, tribals and other backward communities on the basis of their specific grievances. He called it the socialist programme and continuously called for its adoption since the 1929 Lahore Congress. Subhas believed that, in independent India, the State and the political party behind its governing authority should have to be called upon for playing purposive role in shaping the destiny of the Indian people. However, Subhas was very emphatic on building the State as the "organ of the masses and not of any clique of a few rich people" and he also stressed about the necessity of organizing a people's party with a "clear ideology, programme and plan of action." But as he, like Gandhi, viewed the ideology of Communism as wholly alien to the cultural heritage of the Indian people, he was very categorical that the political party of his perception should not be of the type of a Communist party. He said in his Tokyo speech : "People in India have not been interested in the Communist movement,. . . (and) because the nationalist movement in our generation has identified itself with the interests of the masses, i.e., of the workers and peasants who form more than 90 per cent of the people, and because we have their interest at heart, there is no *raison d'etra* for a

separate party like the Communist party."

In his last testament, outlined a day before his assassination, Gandhi urged for the dissolution of the Congress organisation and he decided to throw himself to build up an independent power-base of the Indian people. Subhas was all for building up the people's power but he was found to be very emphatic about the necessity of building an Indian party, having absolute allegiance to the country and pledged to work for the Indian masses on the principle of the "synthesis of nationalism and socialism"—as the instrument for mobilizing the Indian masses and guiding the State for speedy effectuation of national reconstruction and social change in independent India. History showed that although Gandhi succeeded in building up many constructive organisations and during the post-independent days, Acharya Vinoba Bhave and Jayaprakash Narayan had built up the Gandhian movement widspread and much publicized, yet such attempts, exclusively at the level of the people, could neither achieve their objectives by their own efforts, nor could those influence the State to build up a Sarvodaya Samaj or a Samyavadi Samaj of the concept of Gandhi and Subhas.

Subhas was always of the view that for an effective canalization of such a people's movement towards achieving its objectives, a 'freedom-intoxicated missionary organisation'—an ideologically oriented political party—was unavoidable. He, therefore, always stood for a people's party with a 'clear ideology, programme and plan of action' for fulfilling the mission of speedy national reconstruction and social change in post-independent India.

Gandhi was not opposed to building up a people's state of the concept of the Panchayat Raj for building up a Sarvodaya Samaj but his emphasis was more on the necessity of building the people's power as the essential edifice for such institution. Subhas wholly agreed with the Gandhian outlook to build up the base of the people's power, but as an immediate necessity for speedy national reconstruction he desired a careful synthesis of the power of the state and the power of the people. A partyless state is an idealist concept of Gandhian vision of ultimate evolution of a Sarvodaya

Samaj. However, Subhas believed that a people's party to build up the people's power at the bottom of the power of a people's state is a pragmatic necessity under the existing social conditions of India.

Will the new generation in India pledge to work out the integrated ideological missions of Mahatma Gandhi and Subhas Chandra Bose, two men of destiny of modern India, to rebuild the life of the Indian people in an Indian way and in accordance with the heritage of India ? Will they move to build up an egalitarian humanist society of the Indian people on the basis of harmonious integration of the principles of Sarvodaya of the Mahatma and Samyavad of the Netaji ? It is now time to realize that Gandhi and Subhas, in synthesis, is the answer to the ideological quest of the present-day India for galvanizing the Indian people into the spirit of a new clan of a new mission for the speedy national reconstruction of India, giving primacy to the essential needs of the masses, and the lowly masses in particular.

CHAPTER 10

The Mission of India

MAHATMA GANDHI and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose were principally known as two supreme leaders of Indian freedom—nevertheless, they were found to be possessed with a kind of an apocalyptical feeling that "India has a mission to fulfil" in the modern world. They believed that free India will be called upon in the near future to play a great role to carry the modern civilization of the world to a newer phase of higher evolution. They were convinced that the Indian civilization lived through ages and evolved certain fundamental human values which will be of great benefit not only for the renewal of the national ideology of renascent India but also for the whole humanity of our modern time.

Thus said Gandhi in 1921 : "I feel in the inner recess of my heart that the world is sick unto death of bloodspoiling. The world is seeking a way out, and it will be the privilege of the ancient land of India to show the way out to the hungering world." Subhas also told his Nawjawan listeners at Lahore as early as 1929 : "Even at the risk of being called a chauvinist, I would say to my countrymen that India has a mission to fulfil and it is because of this India still lives. There is nothing mystic in the word 'mission'. India has something original to contribute to the culture and civilization of the world. Gandhi said again and again : "Many of us believe, and I am one of them, that through our civilization we have a message to deliver to the world." Subhas almost echoed the voice of Gandhi when he too said : "India's mission (is) to deliver to the world the message that has been her heritage through past ages." Indeed, this faith in the mission of India was a kind of an ideological maxim with both Gandhi and Subhas.

SPIRITUAL HUMANISM

Gandhi and Subhas, the two great pilgrims of Indian freedom, always tried to convey a spirit of a higher faith about the mission of Indian freedom to their countrymen. Both of them believed and urged their countrymen to share this faith with them that the Indian civilization survived through many ages because it had a mission to fulfil for the cause of greater humanity.

Unlike the freedom movement in other colonial countries of the world, the Indian movement was preceded by a unique surge of spiritual cultural renaissance. It remarkably succeeded in rediscovering the soul of the Indian civilization and its distinctive characteristics of spiritual humanism. Indian civilization never denied the necessity of material progress, but it always aimed at spiritualizing the materiality of human life and society. It thus evolved a social philosophy which can be called a philosophy of synthesis as the basic principle behind the concept of its spiritual humanism.

In the modern phase of scientific civilization of the world and the new trend of cultural liberation of the human mind, human societies are inexorably coming nearer to one another. The human civilization is now inevitably moving towards the goal of 'one world'—of universal brotherhood and of a harmonized and integrated concept of a world cizilization. This movement towards a unified world civilization needs today a new ideal and a new philosophy of humanism to respond to this urge for a newer evolution of human society. Gandhi and Subhas believed, like Vivekananda, that the Indian philosophy of synthesis of human values, or, in other words, its principle of spiritual humanism can fulfil this ambition of the human civilization of the modern world. Indeed, Vivekananda had been the first humanist in the modern world who initiated a new movement of new humanism by carrying the massage of spiritual humanism of India in the greater sphere of world humanity. It was he who preached, for the first time in the modern age, the new gospel of universal brotherhood based on the Indian concept of the philosophy of synthesis of human values. Gandhi and Subhas believed that the mission of free India should be to work out this philosophy of

synthesis for evolving a new national ideology of new humanism in India and carry its message, thereafter, to the wider sphere of world humanity of the modern time.

HUMANIST OUTLOOK

Gandhi and Subhas were known as two devout nationalists, not because they had any unusual pride or political obsession about their sense of patriotism, but because they entertained a deep faith in the fundamental values of the Indian civilization. Explaining the basis of his faith in Indian nationalism, Gandhi said : "My nationalism, fierce though it is, is not exclusive, nor designed to harm any nation or individual. My mission is not merely brotherhood of Indian humanity. My mission is not freedom of India...Through realization of freedom of India I hope to realize and carry on the mission of brotherhood of man. The conception of my patriotism is nothing if it is not consistent with the broadest good of the humanity at large... My love, therefore, of nationalism or my idea of nationalism is that my country may die so that human race may live."

Subhas also had keenly evaluated his idea of nationalism in terms of broad international relation as he always believed that "the fate of India is indissolubly linked with the fate of the humanity." His concept of nationalism was not of the kind of self-aggrandisement of the state-nationalism of the west but it had its genesis in the outlook of 'universalism' of the Indian civilization. He said as early as 1928: "Indian nationalism is neither narrow, nor selfish or aggressive. It is inspired by the highest ideals of Satyam, Shivam Sundaram." He again reminded the Marxian critics of Indian nationalism that "from the earliest times, universalism has been the marked feature of Indian thought and culture." Spelling out the heritage of peace and amity of the Indian civilization, he said in 1937 in his critical mood against the Japanese aggression of China : "Standing at the threshold of a new era, let India resolve to aspire after national self-fulfilment in every direction, but not at the expense of other nations and not through the bloody path of self-aggrandisement and imperialism." Subhas always stood for a new world order, for a "world federation based as a real socie ty of nations", on the principles of "sovereignty and independence,

fraternity of every nation, mutual assistance and respecting one another's traditions and developing a creative faculty of each race, economic development through close co-operation on the basis of reciprocity, abolition of racial discrimination, promotion of cultural intercourse and contributing thereby to the progress of mankind." (Tokyo, November 1943).

PRACTICAL IDEALISTS

Gandhi and Subhas were, no doubt, dreamers and idealists in every sense but they were essentially two practical idealists. They dreamt of an India to fulfil her mission in contributing to rebuild a new human society, but as two realists they knew it quite well that unless India could be rebuilt on a firm foundation of higher values and equitable principles of socio-economic justice, such idea will turn to be mere empty ideology. Gandhi, therefore, told his countrymen : "India's destiny is to become a strong, independent nation, for making her unique contribution to the world's progress. Indian nationalism wants to organize itself or to find full self-expression for the benefit and service of the humanity at large."

Subhas also entertained similar views, like Gandhi, as he said : "India possesses all the resources—intellectual, moral and material—which go to make a people great. India is still living in spite of her hoary antiquity, because she has to become great again, because she has a mission to perform. India's mission is first to save herself and thereafter to make contribution to the sum-total of the culture and civilization of the world.".

IDEOLOGICAL EVOLUTION

Ever newer quest for higher concept of human freedom is the main motivation that worked behind the progress of the human civilization from the days of its early dawn. The human society advanced because it perpetually aspired to move ahead towards ever-wider expansion of its concept of human freedom in every sphere of life—spiritual, cultural and social. The ideas of political freedom evolved and along with it evolved as well the higher ideas of political, socio-economic and cultural freedom. After the world civilization entered into

the present era of scientific and industrial revolution and unfettered intellectual liberation, the ideological concept of human freedom began to make leaping strides in search of its ever-newer orientation.

Noting the characteristics of the ideological evolution of modern human civilization, Subhas observed very succinctly, yet in deep philosophical perspective : "We all know that in the seventeenth century England made a remarkable contribution to the world civilization through her ideas of constitutional and democratic government. Similarly, in the eighteenth century, France made a most wonderful contribution to the culture of the world through her ideas of 'liberty, equality and fraternity'. During the nineteenth century, Germany made the most remarkable gift through her Marxian philosophy. During the twentieth century, Russia has enriched the culture and civilization of the world through her achievement in proletarian revolution, proletarian culture and proletarian government." (London speech, 1933)

Stressing the process of ideological evolution of the modern world civilization, Subhas concluded : "The next remarkable contribution to the culture and civilization of the world India will be called upon to make." This revolutionary pilgrim of Indian freedom was, as if, possessed with a living faith in India's role in fulfilling the next mission in the evolutionary course of the ideology of the human civilization. What he said in 1933 he repeated it vibrantly in his letter, sent to his colleagues in India from his Kabul hideout in 1941. He wrote in it that freedom fighters in India will have to "fulfil the dual role of conducting the national struggle to its cherished goal and of building a new India on the principles of liberty, equality and social justice . . . (and) restore India to her proper and legitimate place in the comity of free nations . . . (to) . . . enable India to play her historic role so that human progress may be taken a few stages beyond the point it has so far reached". He again reiterated his hope—his deep faith—in the ideological mission of India in his Tokyo speech in 1944, in which he said again that for " . . . human progress . . . India will move to the next stage of political and social evolution."

Gandhi's mission was not for India alone but also for the whole world. Though he worked for India's freedom and among the Indian people for their socio-economic and cultural uplift yet, in the essential concept of his life's mission, he lived for the whole world. His mission was to devote himself to introduce moral values in the technique of politics and find out an answer to the evils of unbriddled growth of industrialism and consequent materialism of modern world civilization.

NOT FOR COMMUNISM

Why did the Mahatma believe that "the world is seeking a way out" and "the ancient land of India to show that way out to the hungering world" ? Why did Subhas, as well, always talk of an ideological mission that India was expected to be called upon to fulfil in the modern world ? Again, what, in reality, is the concept of mission that had been in view of both Gandhi and Subhas ?

According to his own analysis, Subhas is known to have had underlined the achievement of the proletarian or the Communist Revolution in Russia as the most advanced stage of the fulfilment of ideological aspiration of the present-day human civilization. Gandhi also talked of establishing a "non-violent anarchic society"—a concept of the highest fulfilment of social evolution in common with the ultimate objective of communism. He further said : "I am trying my best to live up to the ideal of communism in the best sense of the term." What did he mean by "the ideals of communism in the best sense of the term" that he wanted to live up to ? Why then Gandhi or Subhas should not have had accepted the socio-economic objectives of communism for the reconstruction of the socio-economic system in free India and accept communism as the philosophy of new humanism ?

Gandhi and Subhas were opposed to capitalist democracy, philosophically as well as for its practical ineffectiveness in solving the socio-economic problems of India. In the economically advanced countries, which are underpopulated or balancedly populated or having fairly high per capita income with assured social welfare benefits for all of their citizens, the system of capitalist democracy might continue to have a

breathing time in those countries. However, in an over-populated and economically backward country like India, with the majority of the people living below poverty level—what to speak of assuring socio-economic justice—even universal social welfare benefits can hardly be assured to the common people under the system of any kind of capitalist democracy. Gandhi and Subhas had, thus, no illusion about capitalist democracy and they, therefore, urged for the adoption of an Indian form of socialism or *sarvodaya* economy with a view to solving the problem of unemployment and poverty of the common mass of the Indian people by assuring them at least a minimum standard of living.

If Gandhi and Subhas were in favour of accepting to socialist principles, why were they disinclined to accept the ideology of Marxian communism, or scientific socialism, as it is called alternatively ? Why were they not in favour of the adoption of a political and socio-economic system as found to have been brought into actual practices in the Soviet Russia ?

NEGATION OF HUMANISM

Gandhi and Subhas never showed any kind of blind hatred against communism or Communist Russia—on the contrary, unlike the diehard critics of communism, they broadly appreciated the humanitarian social appeal of Communism and its call for the establishment of an egalitarian society of liberated people. Its identity with the aspirations of the exploited masses, its lofty ideals of social justice and unfettered human freedom, its objective to abolish capitalism and set up a classless society and its dream of achieving the goal of 'one world' of free human societies based on universal harmony and brotherhood—all such high principles of communism deeply impressed them.

However, they believed that although communism hoped to symbolize the ideal of humanism, yet the metaphysics it propounded could never be expected to carry it to its cherished goal. They thought that philosophically Communism was conceived as a social ideology rather an essential negation of the true values of humanism. They were firmly of the view that an absolutely materialist philosophy could never fulfil the basic

urge of true humanism. They believed that no social doctrine, like communism, which conceptualized all its basic social postulates in total negation of spiritual values and in exclusive recognition of materialism alone—enigmatically called dialectic materialism—could never work as the essential inspiration behind the process of evolution of the human civilization.

Further, Gandhi and Subhas could never accept the wholly economically motivated theory of social change as advocated by communism. They considered the communist doctrine of the inevitable emergence of communist society as the pre-fixed destiny of the evolution of the human civilization as over-axiomatic in its reasoning and too dogmatically lopsided. The philosophy of communism visualized the emergence of a communist society as the ultimate consummation of the human civilization where there will be no ownership of property and no class, no state, no family and no religion. Such a vision of a society—a totally materialist society—as the highest achievement of the human civilization in denial of the human values, as acquired through many millenia of the progress of the human civilization, appeared to Gandhi and Subhas as too destructive and too biophysical in concept. They feared that if the metaphysics of communism were worked out to build up a human society, it will not be really a humanist society, but a society of amorally and aspiritually conglomerated human atoms denuded of the very soul of humanity. Such a communist society might appear as temporarily creative in materialistic achievements as it is found to happen in the case of any other totalitarian society, but ultimately it will kill the higher aspiration of the human civilization and will destroy humanity from within.

The Russian Revolution of 1917 was hailed by the progressive people all over the world as the harbinger of setting up a new ideal of a new human society of higher human freedom. The quest for ever-expanding human freedom was thought to be the basic urge of the philosophy of communism. For the progressive realization of such an ideal of human freedom, Marx conceived of a social process of gradual withering away of state in a communist society. Tragically, the first experiment of communism in the first communist country of the

world believed the very first principle of communism. In Russia (and later in all other communist countries), instead of any beginning of the devolution of the power of the state, the state has been given the hide-bound system of a diabolic machine of totalitarian absolutism. Such an absolute state—a state with an inbred instinct of perpetuation of horror, violence, persecution and denial of primary freedom of its citizens—was never known to have had existed under any political system at any time before in any country in the history of the world. Experiments of communism in Russia disillusioned Gandhi and Subhas as well as many other great social thinkers and revolutionaries all over the world, and raised the basic questions in their minds about the validity of the very philosophic postulates behind the concept of the ideology of communism.

Communism in Russia (as in other communist countries) has certainly achieved something for the common people. It has assured many social welfare benefits to all the citizens of Russia much better than the similar benefits offered to their citizens in some of the most advanced social democracies of the world. Communism has succeeded in changing the old structure of capitalism, but qualitatively it has not succeeded in making any radical departure from either the capitalist system of monopoly production or capitalist motivation of economic growth, nor could it find any new incentive, different from capitalism, for responsive participation of the workers in the productive system of communism. No, communism in actual practice has negated the first precept of its philosophy, namely, the precept of assuring human freedom. Communism has assumed a monstrous form of a monolithic autocratic system denying even the elementary right of human freedom. It is found to enforce its absolute materialist will on the people in order to peremptorily reorient all their socio-cultural values—all the concepts of their human values—in accordance with its pre-set ideas based on the monistic concept of economic realism. All is done in a communist state in the name of an ideology and by a closed-circuit political system, euphemistically called the party of the proletarians. Not even under any system of theocracy of the medieval days has totalitarianism ever

been as absolute as it is found to be in a system of communism today.

Gandhi and Subhas could not accept the ideology of communism as representing the spirit of true humanism. Not only were they opposed to the absolutist materialist philosophy of communism but also they found that, in actual practice, communism had turned to be a system of absolute denial of human freedom—a system of imposing a kind of neo-slavery on the humanity. Freedom, they always believed, had to be recognized as the essential principle for conceptualization of the ideology of true humanism.

EQUATION OF HUMAN FREEDOM

The history of the human civilization, as philosophically viewed, is, indeed, a history of the progressive unfoldment of the concept of human freedom. The human civilization advanced through the continuous process of struggle for the exploration of wider avenues of freedom in political, economic, social and cultural spheres of human society. The humanity suffered, through ages, from one or the other form of slavery under various systems of authoritarianism. But the march of human freedom continued more or less untramelled and in the modern age it reached a significant milestone, for the first time, in the sphere of the system of politics. The triumph of the concept of the people's sovereignty over the absolute monarchial right opened a new vista of human freedom. The rights of the liberty of the common people, conceptually denoted as democracy, became the principal chariot for the further progress of the ideas of human freedom.

Democracy came to be universally recognized as the inalienable right of every people in every country in the modern age. But after the emergence of the concept of state-nationalism, followed by the unique phenomenon of industrial revolution, a new economic system—the system of capitalism—evolved, taking advantage of individual liberty as assured by the political system of democracy. However, capitalism created new problems—rather very critical problems—for the human civilization. It not only stratified the people into two sharply conflicting classes of 'the haves' and 'the have-nots',

but also it, overtly or covertly, began to control or manipulate the political authority of democracy. Thus, capitalism precipitated new crises in regard to the principle of equitable sharing of the values of freedom as guaranteed by democracy.

A renewal of search began to salvage the spirit of universal freedom from the clutches of capitalism. In consequence, a new socio-political philosophy was propounded to establish a new equation between the principle of sovereign rights of the people as embodied in the concept of political democracy and the claim of their socio-economic equality as a whole. This new philosophy is known in history as socialism, which proposed a recipe in the form of a new socio-political system, claiming to offer a solution of the conflict between the claim of political liberty and the claim of economic freedom.

Many doctrines of socialism came to be advocated but the doctrine of communism, which is also alternatively called scientific socialism, turned out to be most vital, both in reasoning and in the form of an active movement for its actual implementation, particularly after the spectacular success of the Communist Revolution in Russia.

The Russian Revolution of 1917 was looked upon by the idealists all over the world as a historic landmark in the progress for the fulfilment of the higher aspirations of human freedom. But, the communist experiment in Russia led to develop many basic problems, *vis-a-vis*, the quest for greater expansion of human freedom. The fundamental principle of communism—its urge for wider fulfilment of human freedom in the form of the ideals of unfettered sovereign rights, economic equality and socio-cultural liberation of the people—suffered a terrible shock in Russia itself. Instead of becoming a beacon of human freedom, communism emerged in the image of a megalomaniac totalitarian system of absolute materialism built on merciless denial of elementary political, social and cultural freedom of the people. And, in the name of economic equality, what it offered was nothing but social welfare benefits, though much better than found under any capitalist system. In Russia (as in other communist states later), the sovereign rights of the people—the cardinal principle of human freedom—is found to be usurped by a monolithic

authority of a political oligarchy. It succeeded, no doubt, to eliminate the capitalist class but it was seen to be replaced not by any classless and stateless socio-political system, as visualized in the philosophy of communism, but by a new privileged class of graded communists.

In the history of the human civilization and its urge for the discovery of higher values of human freedom, communism has, thus, created new problems of acute imbalance in the aspirational equation between the principles of freedom and the principles of democracy and the ideals of socio-economic equality. In actual practice and as to the philosophical reprobe about its basic postulates, communism has thrown a new challenge to the human civilization today in search of a new ideal of human freedom and a new philosophy of humanism. The problem before the humanity today is how to regain the principles of freedom and democracy and how to find a system of economic equality in harmony with these principles. Or, in other words, the problem is how to find a new ideology of humanism for the harmonious integration of the principles of 'freedom, democracy and socialism', as Subhas put it, and carry forward the movement in quest of the higher ideals of human freedom beyond the phase of capitalist democracy and totalitarian communism.

MISSION OF NEW HUMANISM

Can India aspire to resolve this crisis—the ideological crisis—which the march of human freedom faces today ? Can she hope to find a new equation between the ideals of socio-political liberty and the ideal of economic equality ? Or, in other words, can India discover a harmonious nexus for equitable integration of the principles of liberty, democracy and socialism ? Can she find out a way of life to harmonize spiritual values with the material aspirations of human society ? Can modern India hope to conceptualize a new gospel of humanism to liberate the concept of human freedom from the blind alley of capitalism, on the one hand, and the bottleneck of communism, on the other ?

This is exactly the historic task that Gandhi and Subhas aspired to assign to new India to fulfil. Gandhi believed that

the present-day world is 'hungering' for a new message of new humanism from India. And, for the same reason, Subhas urged free India to "move to the next stage of social and political evolution" of the human civilization.

Both of them believed that the Indian civilization possessed the heritage of a social philosophy and a remarkable perspective of a social system, which, he felt, should be harnessed for evolving a modern concept of a new ideology of humanism. The social philosophy, that India cherished through out the ages, is the philosophy of synthesis of various human and social values. And, about the perspective of its social system—it is the concept of devolution of power and decentralization of its socio-political institutions as it was given shape in its age-old system of Panchayat Raj.

Spiritual aspiration had always been the fundamental faith with the Indian civilization—nonetheless, it never ignored the necessity of material achievements nor the ambition of cultural enrichment of its social life. In the words of Subhas the Indian civilization believed in the synthesis of "the demand of the matter and the demand of the spirit, of the body and the soul, for simultaneous progress in both fronts" of social life. Because of this philosophy of synthesis and the Panchayat system of devolution and decentralization of social power, Indian society never suffered from any kind of totalitarian control. The spirit of human freedom remained free and essentially unchanged amidst the changing socio-political systems of India. It was because of its philosophy of synthesis and its decentralized social system that the Indian civilization survived while many other civilizations of the world perished, and India remained an open society enabling the spirit of human freedom to flourish unbridled. This is the unique lesson of the history of the Indian civilization which deeply impressed both Gandhi and Subhas.

In their search for a new social philosophy of humanism for our modern civilization, none of them could agree with the politico-economic system of capitalist democracy. This system appeared to them as overloaded with materialistic ambitions, having an inherent motivation towards the class control of society and concentration of socio-political and economic

powers in the hands of a few. They were of the view that such a class-dominated and overcentralized system was inconsistent with the ideal of human freedom and true humanism.

Communism, which has been advocated as the social philosophy alternative to capitalist democracy, was equally unacceptable to them. They believed that the ideology of communism, which is wholly materialistic in its outlook of socio-cultural values and absolutely totalitarian in its concept of social system and which believes in the total concentration of all powers of society in the authority of the state and such a state being peremptorily controlled by a pack of arbitrarily chosen few, could never be expected to fulfil the higher mission of humanism. They were convinced that this materialistically motivated totalitarian social philosophy was bound to end ultimately in the formation of a closed society of authoritarian control, throttling the very spirit of human freedom.

According to Gandhi and Subhas, the urge of human freedom should be considered, always and under all conditions of social progress, as the elan vital for the evolution of the human civilization. The human society must remain free for everhigher fulfilment of the concept of human freedom and the course of the human civilization should never be conceived to be chalked out on the pattern of any astrological determinism, visualizing any kind of predestined consummation of its finality. The human civilization will progress and the process of progress will continue eternally as long as it survives and it will be the task of the creative genius of the humanity at large to evolve an everhigher social philosophy, in consonant with the requirements of the time and condition of the history of the human civilization. Such an evaluation of the human civilization, according to these two ideological dreamers of India, should be viewed as the principal objective in search of a new philosophy of humanism.

Keeping the heritage of the Indian civilization in view, Gandhi and Subhas urged that the mission of modern India should be to evolve a new philosophy of humanism which should primarily set before the industrial civilization of the present-day world an ideal synthesis of spiritual value with the materiality of modern society. It should also invoke a

spiritual concept of universal brotherhood on the basis of the synthesis of various religious faiths. It should transform the outlook of political nationalism of the modern nation-states into a concept of cultural nationalism and synthesize nationalism with internationalism in order to create a new milieu of universal fraternity of the world humanity. It should reorient the form and structure of democracy as well as of socialism by introducing the principles of devolution of power in the basic institutional concepts and structures of their political, economic and socio-cultural systems. Finally, the concepts of cultural nationalism. decentralized democracy, decentralized socialism and harmony between the demand of the spirit and the demand of the matter should be synthesized into a new social philosophy of new humanism, the object of which should be to establish an open human society for a progressive unfoldment of the spirit of human freedom.

This is, in quintessense, the mission of India that Gandhi and Subhas fervently hoped free India to fulfil for herself and for the whole of the humanity of our modern time.

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